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THESIS

THE ARAB-AMERICANS: A DEMOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL PROFILE

by

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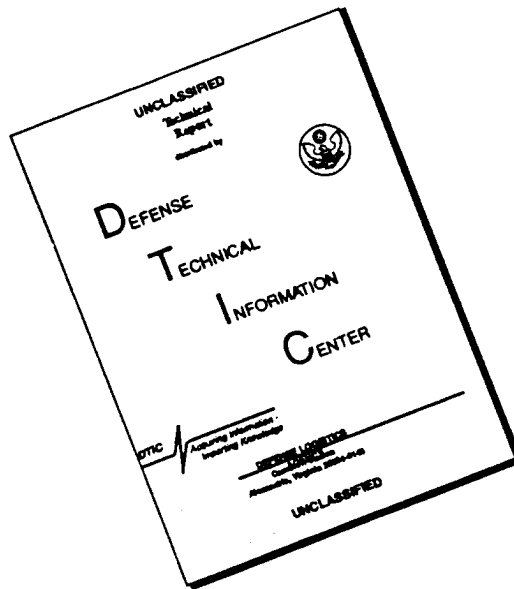Second Reader: Ralph H. Magnus

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After the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, for the first time in U.S. history, the United States acquired a large group of immigrants from Arab Muslim countries. This immigration is so recent that relatively little is known about it. This thesis is a demographic and cultural examination of the Arab community in America. It asks, who the Arab-Americans are, where they come from, where they go in America, how they are assimilating, and how they organize and act socially, culturally, and politically. A key question is how cohesive they are as a community which is likely to be both a new and distinctive voice in American society and political life.

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THE ARAB-AMERICANS: A DEMOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL PROFILE

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iii

ABSTRACT

After the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, for the first time in U.S. history, the United States acquired a large group of immigrants from Arab Muslim countries. This immigration is so recent that relatively little is known about it. This thesis is a demographic and cultural examination of the Arab community in America. It asks, who the Arab-Americans are, where they come from, where they go in America, how they are assimilating, and how they organize and act socially, culturally, and politically. A key question is how cohesive they are as a community which is likely to be both a new and distinctive voice in American society and political life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

The passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 marked the end of ethnic preferences in immigration; an immigrant's admission was no longer based on country of origin. The change in policy made it possible for record numbers of Arab immigrants to enter the United States. This current migration is distinct in its high numbers, varied nationalities, and religious adherence to Islam.

Another distinguishing attribute of this immigration wave is the lack of information on their demographic and cultural composition. For example, the landmark Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (1980) mentions the arrival of the new immigrants but fails to provide a substantive profile.

Recent events such as the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings have generated considerable interest in the Arab-American and Muslim-American communities. Contrary to public belief, the terms Arab and Muslim are not interchangeable and the communities are not synonymous. The majority of Arab-Americans are not Muslims. In fact, of the estimated 5-7 million Muslims in the United States, the Arabs are the third largest ethnic group following the African-Americans and Indo-Pakistanis.[1]

The resultant portraits of Arab-Americans, even those completed by responsible journalists and academics, are shallow and anecdotal. The incomplete coverage has bred

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[1] There are an estimated one billion Muslims world wide and only 200 million are Arabs. The remaining 800 million include persons from such diverse countries as Iran, Turkey, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. Large Muslim populations can also be found in Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe.

and encouraged ignorance and, in some instances, hatred and violence.[2] Americans, already imprinted with images of terrorism generated by past conflicts with Libya, Iran, and Iraq, accept the superficial depictions as gospel.

Steve Emerson's documentary on Arab terrorist networks in the United States, *Jihad in America* (1994), is the best example of the inflammatory exposés. Although Emerson states the majority of Arab-Americans do not condone or participate in the terrorist networks, the film leaves the distinct impression all Arab immigrants are members of an Islamic conspiracy determined to undermine world peace and destroy the United States. Compounding the negative imagery, members of academia and government have tried to fill the enemy void left by the demise of Communism with Islam.[3] Americans "have replaced the red threat with the green threat, namely Islam." (Sheehan in Brooke 1995)

In addition to the waves of fear generated by visions of an Islamic fifth column, Americans have a growing apprehension of all immigrants. Unrestricted migration is changing the country under our feet. The U.S. Census Bureau projects non-European ethnic minorities will comprise over 50 percent of the country's population by the year 2050.

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[2] In 1986 during the Reagan Administration's showdown with Libya 49 anti-Arab crimes were reported. The number jumped to 119 during the Gulf War and 222 in the three days following the Oklahoma City bombing. The incidents included bombings, shootings, and vandalism. (ADC 1987; ADC 1991; CAIR 1995)

[3] The Spring 1995 issue of *Foreign Policy* features a Graham Fuller article entitled "The Next Ideology." The article includes a picture of Muslim women in traditional black hijabs with automatic weapons. The caption reads "Challenging Western Ideology."

The average American does not desire the economic and cultural changes that will accompany this demographic shift. Demands for immigration reform and increased border security are but two of the manifestations of American dissatisfaction with the status quo and the projected future. A 1993 Gallup Poll quantifies the perceived threat of the "new" immigrants:

- 65 percent of the respondents felt immigration should be decreased.[4]

- 55 percent of the respondents felt immigrants threatened American culture.

- 56 percent of the respondents felt immigrants drained public resources for education, welfare, and health care.

- 64 percent of the respondents felt immigrants hurt the American economy by stealing jobs and lowering wages. (Moore 1993)

The same poll asked participants their feelings on specific immigrant groups. For the first time, Arabs were included in the question. Arab immigrants received the lowest approval rating when 64 percent of participants responded that too many immigrants were being allowed into the country from the Arab world.[5] (Moore 1993)

This thesis is a contemporary look at the Arab-Americans within the framework of the immigration debate: have Arab immigrants contributed to American prosperity or are the poll results justified and Arab-Americans are a threat? A demographic and cultural

_____

[4]The 1993 poll marked the first time a majority said immigration should be decreased. Previous polls in 1986, 1977, and 1965 indicated 49, 42, and 33 percent respectively, felt the immigration rate needed to be cut.

[5] In a similar question, people were asked to rate immigrants from selected nations on their contribution to society. No Arab nationalities were included, but the Iranians were. Sixty-eight percent of those polled responded Iranian immigrants had "created problems for the country." (Moore 1993) The disapproval rating was the highest of any nationality.

profile of the Arab-Americans community which will examine in detail who they are, where they are, and how they are, will provide the answer.

Who the Arab-Americans are is not a clear cut issue. To begin with, there is some debate over what it means to be Arab. Dr. Phillip Hitti, a recognized scholar and expert in Arab history, defines Arab as follows: "Arabs in modern usage is a term applied to Arabic speaking peoples who at present occupy the area extending from Iraq to Morocco. The term, therefore, is a linguistic rather than an ethnic one." (Arab American Almanac 1994)

Charles Issawi, writing on the topic during the height of the pan-Arab movement, offered a broader definition: Arabs are those persons "inhabiting a definite stretch of territory, bound by ties of kinship, speaking a common language, sharing common historical memories, and practicing a common way, expressed in the form of religion and other cultural traits." (Drysdale and Blake 1985) A closer examination of the region's history reveals anything but cultural and historical uniformity. None the less, an intangible and nebulous Arabic heritage exists.

For the purpose of this thesis, the Census Bureau definition of Arab-Americans will be used. Arab-Americans include " those persons who trace their ancestry to the northern African countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia, and the western Asian countries of Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen." (CP-3-2 1990)

The fluid nature of the term Arab and the hyphenate Arab-American, impacts the immigrants' identity at the community and individual levels. Different Arab-American groups have adopted different meanings of the word Arab (Haddad 1994). The evolution

of their ethnic identity is included in Chapter II for immigrants arriving before 1967 and Chapter IV for immigrants arriving after 1967.

Chapter II also includes a summary of the early Arab migration to the United States and the cultural institutions they established and participated in. The first Arab arrivals were predominantly single Christian males from the Ottoman province of Syria or, what is today, Lebanon. They are distinguished by their homogeneity and their near complete assimilation by the end of World War II.

The second wave of Arab arrivals revitalized the community in the early fifties. Western educated, the majority of the immigrants were Muslim professionals escaping the growing turmoil in the Middle East. They retained the secular aspects of Arab culture while marginalizing their Islamic upbringing.

Present day Arab immigrants are considered part of a third wave, commencing in 1967 after the change in immigration laws and the Arab defeat in the Six Day War. As previously mentioned, these immigrants outnumber their predecessors: 75 percent of Arab immigrants arrived after 1964. They also come from different countries. Whereas the majority of the first wave were Christian, this group is Islamic. The details of the recent migration pattern is examined in Chapter III.

Chapter III also contains a demographic profile of the entire Arab-American community and a comparison of the Arab-American aggregate to the national average in certain economic and cultural statistics. The data reveals Arab-Americans are a diverse community, as varied as the homelands they left behind. Lebanese Christians still comprise the largest percentage of the population, but their dominance is being challenged by Muslim new comers from the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa.

The Arab-Americans are concentrated in twenty metropolitan areas, with Detroit having the highest population. The largest numbers have settled in three states; over one third of Arab-Americans live in California, New York, and Michigan.

The majority of Arab-Americans are American born and hold U.S. citizenship. On average, they are younger, wealthier, and higher educated than other Americans. Over two-thirds of the Arab-Americans participating in the labor force are white collar workers. In addition, their unemployment rates are lower than the national average.

Statistics on Arabs arriving between 1980 and 1990 were compared to the Arab-American aggregate to determine the economic and social impact of the most recent arrivals on the community. The newer immigrants had lower average incomes and higher incidence of poverty. However, their education levels are comparable to the American average and their occupational profile revealed a majority were white collar workers.

The final section of Chapter III ranks selected ethnic groups in economic and educational categories. Of the thirteen groups, the Arab-Americans placed consistently in the top half of the standings and within one or two places of the national average.

Chapter IV completes the portrait of the Arab-Americans by addressing their cultural identity and the institutions designed to maintain it. Again, the diversity and subsequent fragmentation of the community emerges. National and religious differences affect the social and civic incorporation of the community and the individual.

The majority of Arab-Americans are Christians and one would think they would have no difficulties in joining the Judeo-Christian mainstream. Instead they are marginalized for two reasons. First, a large percentage of Arab Christians belong to distinct Eastern Orthodox churches and second, the Protestant Arab-Americans practice a

more conservative strain of Christianity. As a result, Arab-American churches were established and continue to proliferate. (Haddad 94)

Muslim emigration from the Islamic world to the West is as new to the history of the religion as it is to the history of the United States. Conflict between Islam and Judeo-Christian America is not limited to the Sabbath. Being able to abide by dietary restrictions, wear traditional clothing, and attend religious services are three of the smallest obstacles Arab Muslims encounter. Additionally, the mosques in the United States are not like the mosques in the Middle East. The majority of American Muslims are not Arabs, but African-Americans and Indo-Pakistani immigrants and, as a result, seven out of ten mosques are multicultural and do not adhere to Arab cultural norms. (Dart 1995; Haddad 1994)

Prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Arab culture in America was near extinction. The Arab-American community was overwhelmed by the war's "...one-sided press coverage, the general U.S. public support of Israeli aggression, and the apparent deliberate effort by the United States government to prolong the United Nations debate for the cease-fire...until Israel had achieved its objectives." (Haddad 1994)

Anger about the war and the concurrent empowerment of minorities in American society combined to create an Arab renaissance. Mosque and church attendance rose, Arabic lessons became fashionable for second and third generations, academics began to chronicle the Arab-American experience, and the community attempted to enter the political arena.

The renaissance was short lived but the effects of the cultural resurgence are still visible today. National organizations such as the Association of Arab-American

University Graduates (AAUG) formed after the war have are still active and working to influence U.S. foreign policy and correct the negative stereotype of Arab-Americans. These organizations were the first to transcend the religious and national differences in the community and to unite American born and immigrant Arabs in common goals. (Haddad 1994; Sulieman 1994)

Chapter IV also includes the Arab-American efforts to develop political influence. Initial Arab-American failures had four major causes. First, their negative image and repeated confrontations between the United States and the Middle East[6] made any political affiliation with them a public relations disaster. Second, the Arab-Americans' natural enemy in Washington D.C. is the powerful Jewish-American lobby. Few politicians were willing to sacrifice the votes and financial support of the Jewish-American lobby to adopt a pro-Arab stance. Third were the Arab-Americans themselves, their diversity made it impossible to reach a consensus on any issues other than humanitarian. Lastly, the Arab-American political organizations were new and had yet to find the right leaders and the right messages to mobilize the community. (Bard 1991; Shain 1995)

The Arab-Americans found their political voice during the national election of 1988[7] and have had gained considerable respect in the years since. The turnaround is due to combination of factors. The Arab American Institute (AAI) founded in 1985, was the first national organization to take a grassroots approach to political mobilization. The

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[6] Events such as the 1973 oil embargo, the Iranian Hostage Crisis, the bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, and the Berlin Disco bombing made anything Arab despised by the American public. (Sulieman 1988)

[7] Fifty Arab-Americans represented the community as delegates and members of the Democratic National Convention. They came within a few votes of placing Palestinian self-determination on the Democratic plank. (Samhan 1989)

AAI focused on voter registration, local elections, and party membership. Progress in the Arab-Israeli peace talks has eased the competition between the Arab-American and Jewish lobbies and increased Arab-American access to the politicians. The Arab-Americans have also altered their political strategy. Their old anti-Israeli focus alienated potential supporters. The Arab-Americans have learned to frame their political messages in a national interest context to increase their appeal. (Shain 1995)

Like most, the conclusion contains a summary of the thesis. It also includes a synopsis of the forces influencing Arab-American unity. Although the factors pushing for unity--multicultural America, political inaccessibility, anti-Arab racism, religion, and technology--are more numerous than the pressures against it--Arab-American heterogeneity and lack of a common identity--the latter are stronger. It is doubtful the Arab-Americans will ever be able reach agreement on their political and cultural identity. And until they do, the community will struggle to become a distinctive voice in American society and political life.

II. THE EARLY ARAB-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

A. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Arab immigration is divided into three separate waves. The first, from 1876 to World War II, was largely composed of Christian Arabs from what is today Syria and Lebanon. The second wave of immigrants arrived between 1945 and 1967. Predominantly well-educated professionals, they represented all regions of the Middle East. This chapter will summarize the first and second waves' historical experiences in the United States.

B. MIGRATION FACTORS

Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II wanted to expand his Empire's trade. He looked westward, past Europe to the United States. The year was 1876 and Philadelphia was hosting the Centennial Exposition. The sultan ordered his best artisans to attend and exhibit their crafts. A large number of the men who made the journey were from the Ottoman millet of Syria and they returned home with stories of limitless wealth and opportunity. The artisans and their reports of American "streets made of gold" are credited with inspiring the first wave of Arabs to migrate to the United States. (Naff 1994)

They called themselves the al-Nizaleh, the visitors, because they did not intend to make America their home (Sulieman 1994). Lured by the success stories of Arabs who had been to America and returned, they were predominantly young, single males who had been sent by their families to work, make money, and return to their villages. (Naff 1994; Sulieman 1994)

The majority of the first wave immigrants came from Mount Lebanon, one of the most prosperous regions of the quickly decaying Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century. The relative prosperity that should have kept the Arabs from leaving actually enabled them to do so. Not living hand to mouth allowed families to finance the trip. (Naff 1994)

The exact number of first wave immigrants is impossible to discern. Until 1899, the U.S. immigration records placed the Arabs in the same category as other arrivals from the Ottoman Empire: Turkish. From 1899 until the end of World War II, the immigrants were labeled as Syrians. The number of Syrians in the record books is not representative of Arab arrivals due to the random designation of some Arabs as Other Asian, Other African or Refugee. This problem would continue until the mid-sixties. (Karpat 1985; Naff 1983; Sulieman 1994) Figures 2-1 and 2-2 are best estimates of the number and gender of early arrivals.[8] There is no documentation of the immigrants' religion. Based upon oral histories and geographical origins of the Arabs, it is believed 90 to 95 percent of the first wave pioneers were Christian.[9] (Naff 1994)

Before and after World War I, Arab immigration peaked. A rising trend of isolationism threatened to limit future migration and time was limited for the women and children to escape the war torn area and the incoming mandate governments. The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 placed an annual limit of 100 persons on Syrian immigration and halted the first wave. (Naff 1994; Sulieman 1994)

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[8] For exact numbers refer to the tables in Appendix A.

[9] Some estimates place Muslim immigration considerably higher at 15 to 20 percent of the total influx. (Karpat 1985)

Unlike the pioneers, the second wave was much larger and more heterogeneous. Arriving between World War II and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, they represented every country in the Middle East and North Africa as illustrated in Figures 2-3 and 2-4.[10] Male immigrants were more frequent than female, but the gap between the two genders had closed considerably. In another demographic shift, the Muslim immigrants outnumbered the Christians in roughly a three to two ratio.[11] (Abu-Laban and Sulieman 1989; Naff 1983)

The second wave was dominated by students and professionals. The students arrived in the United States with the intent to get their degrees and return home. They stayed instead. The education and opportunities available to them in the states far outweighed the temptation to return home to a region of increasing instability. The professionals, most of whom had been educated in the West and had returned home, sought to escape for the same reason. The nationalist and socialist movements sweeping the Middle East destroyed the achievement based "...distribution of goods, services, and economic, as well as social, rewards." (Elkholy 1969) The repressive military regimes and the rising tension between Israel and the Arab states created a volatile environment the intellectuals and professionals could live without. (S Abraham 1983; Elkholy 1969; Naff 1983)

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[10] Exact numbers are located in Appendix A.

[11] Some estimates place the percentage of Muslim immigrants as high as 70 percent. (Elkholy 1969)
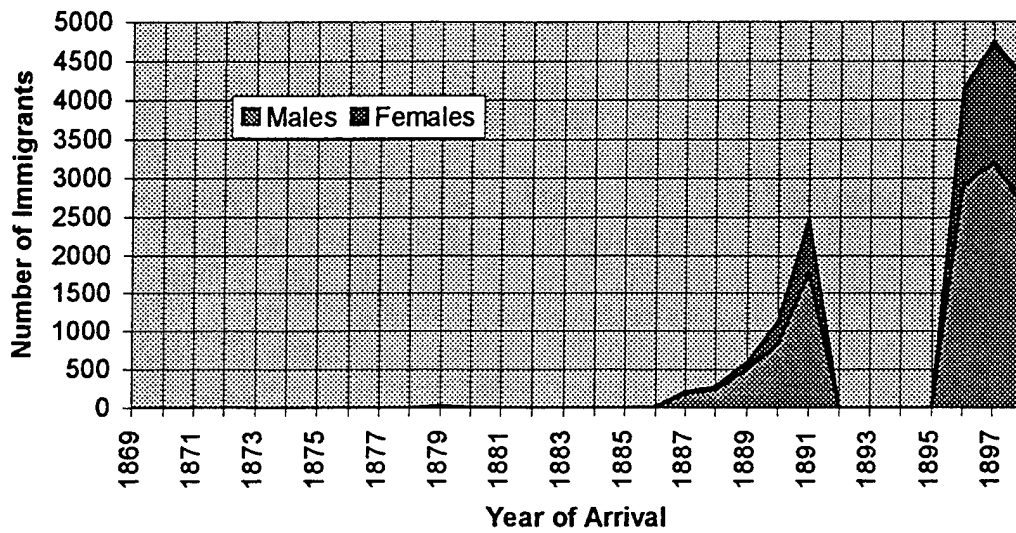
**Figure 2-1. Number of Turkish Immigrants from 1869 to 1898.
After Orfalea 1988.**
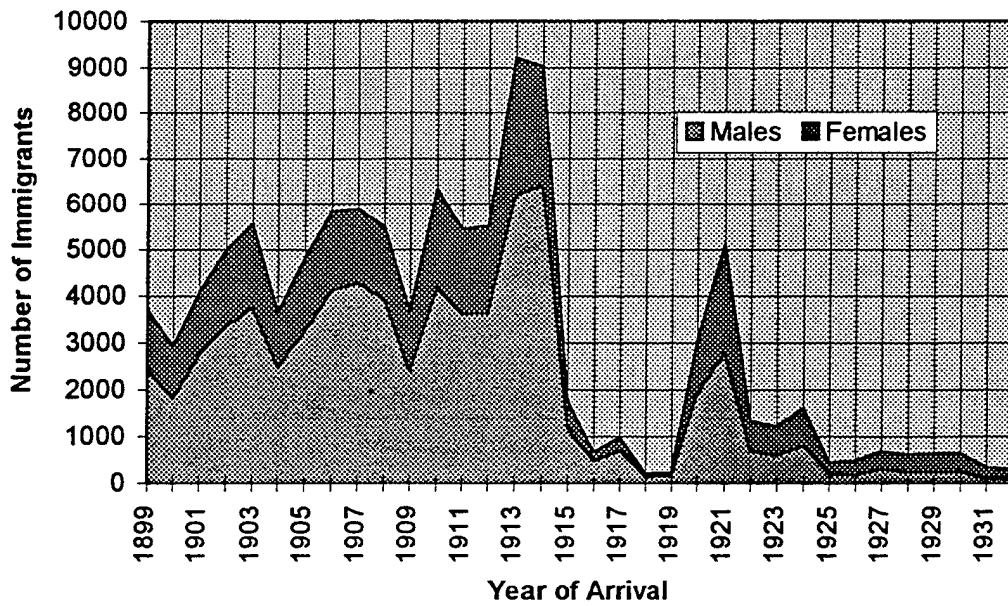
**Figure 2-2. Number of Syrian Immigrants from 1899 to 1932.
After Orfalea 1988.**

14

Number of Immigrants
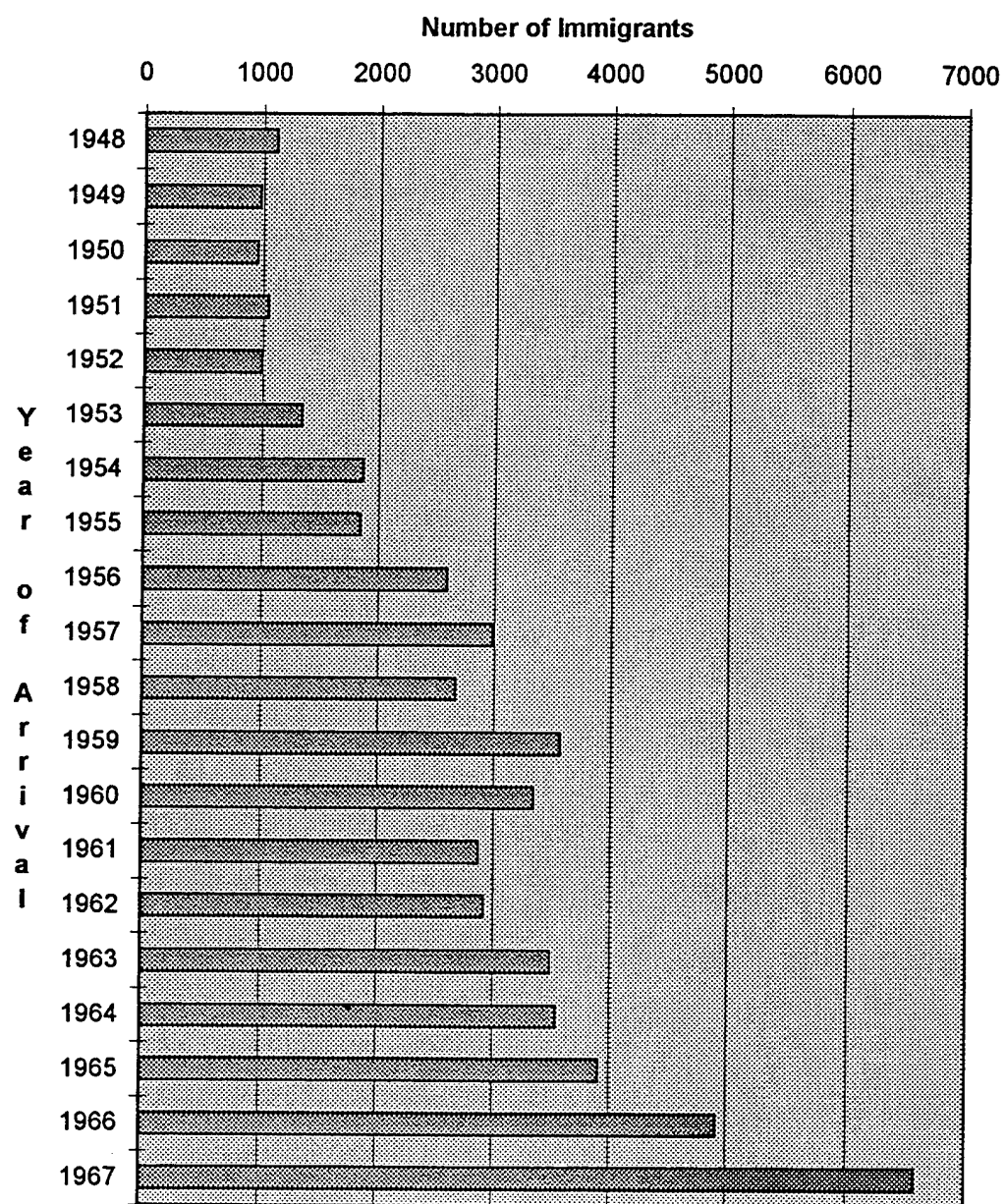
Figure 2-3. Arab Immigration from 1948 to 1967. After Orfalea 1988.
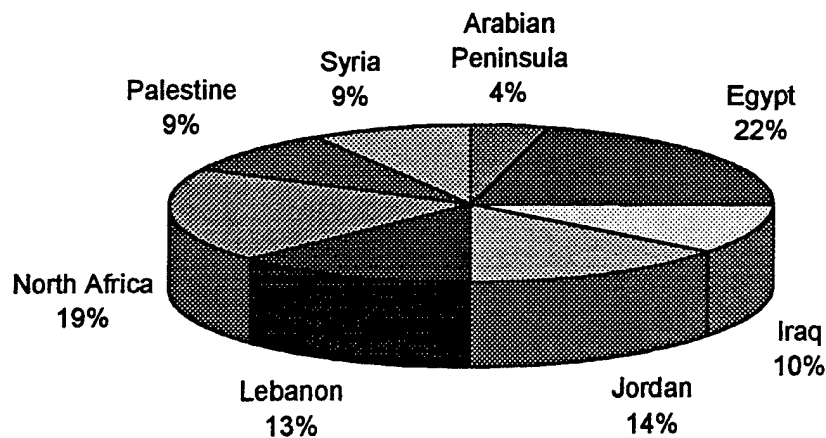
Figure 2-4. Origins of Arab Immigrants, 1948-67. After Orfalea 1988. North Africa includes Algeria, Djibouti, Libya, Sudan, & Tunisia. Arabian Peninsula includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Yemen.

C. CULTURAL IDENTITY

The first immigrants identified themselves by religious sect, first as Muslim or Christian and then by denomination such as Sunni or Druze, Maronite or Melkite. When interacting outside Arab enclaves, they referred to themselves and were called Syrians or Syrian-Americans after the Ottoman millet they had come from. The end of World War I and the emergence of the state of Lebanon resulted in the introduction of national identity. The community split between the Lebanese and Syrian. (Sulieman 1994) Within one generation, however, the labels became irrelevant. The second generation had assimilated and abandoned their heritage. They thought of themselves as Americans. (S Abraham 1983; Abu-Laban 1989)

The second wave's entrance into American society coincided with the Arab nationalist movement in the Middle East. The new arrivals did not find the factional divisions or complete loss of identity acceptable so the Arab-American hyphenate was

16

introduced. The expression of pan-Arab sentiment in the United States mirrored its

popularity in the Middle East. The failure of the United Arab Republic and the defeat of

the Arab forces in 1967 meant the death of pan-Arabism in both societies. Arab

immigrants "…returned to identifying solely with their home countries while verbally

indicating their approval of notions of greater Arab unity." (S Abraham 1983)

D. ASSIMILATION

Arriving in America during the heyday of the melting pot philosophy, the pressure

for the first wave to Americanize was high (Abu-Laban and Sulieman1989). Additionally,

the immigrants primary motive for migrating was economic and success in their trade,

peddling,[12] depended on assimilation

Peddling sped the Americanization of the Arabs. Negligible English skills

improved with interaction with their customers and increased sales due to enhanced

communication provided the motivation to learn. Peddling was a lucrative business,[13]

allowing the Arabs to enter the middle class within years of arrival. The continuous travel

exposed them to most positive aspects of the American dream: the farmhouses and the

small businesses that could be theirs if only they worked hard enough. Life on the road

also inhibited the establishment of formal institutions such as churches and mosques to

reinforce cultural norms and the geographic diffusion made the Arabs less of a threat to

White America. The occasional dark-skinned merchant with adequate financial means and

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[12] Ninety percent of single males arriving before 1914 left New York to become peddlers. (Naff 1983)

[13] Arab peddlers earned an average of $1,000 a year, 30 percent higher than the national average at the turn of the century. (Naff 1983)

English skills and no national identity did not attract the hatred and suspicion the ghettoes of other impoverished minorities did. (Naff 1983; 1994)

Learning English and wearing Western clothes to increase business did not necessarily conflict with Arab culture. The pioneer immigrants equated family honor with wealth and were therefore willing to adjust to increase their wealth. In sum, "…the attempts of the immigrant generation to maintain Arab culture ran afoul of their eagerness to succeed in the United States; the requirements of success relegated tradition to second place." (Naff 1983)

World War I was a watershed event for the first wave of immigrants. Any doubts about staying in the United States were resolved with the Ottoman entrance into the war. The al-Nizaleh could not return home. The resultant separation, reinforced by a vocal appeal in the Arab-American press "…that the Nizaleh should make a positive contribution to the United States in order to show gratitude for reaping the benefits of being in this country…," (Sulieman 1994) created a massive movement within the Nizaleh to Americanize. The overt call for assimilation reinforced the already growing trend in that direction.

Westernized before their arrival, the second wave Muslim professionals marginalized their cultural practices. They did not attend mosques, the women discarded their veils, and an estimated two-thirds married outside their religion (Abu-Laban 1989; Cainkar 1994). Most had a good command of the English language and a high enough education to get well paying jobs that granted immediate access to the American middle class.

Politics not culture was the stumbling block for the complete assimilation of the second wave. The new arrivals disagreed with U.S. policy on Israel and the nationalist movements. However, those immigrants who had become politicized soon tempered their convictions. Pressure generated by the Cold War made American society hostile to any dissension. (Naff 1983)

By the mid-sixties the environment had changed considerably; cultural differences and political dissent were socially acceptable. The late arrivals of the second wave did not feel compelled to surrender their cultural or political beliefs, but neither did they find immediate outlets for them.

E. EARLY ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

Like the majority of first wave arrivals, the first Muslim immigrants were young, single men drawn to America by the economic opportunities. They did not view their journey to the states as a threat to their faith, their stay was going to be only temporary. In fact, the majority of the immigrants who did return home were Muslims. Despite numbering in the thousands by the turn of the century, no mosques were established until the 1920's. The nature of Islam[14] and the immigrants' intentions to return home after making their fortunes did not need formal institutions. (Abu-Laban 1989)

The first known effort to organize communal prayers occurred in Ross, North Dakota in 1900. Without an imam or mosque, the prayer meetings were held in private homes and led by the older men. Ross had one of three functioning mosques in the United States during the 1920's. The thirty years without a formal organization and educated

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[14] Islam is a " "portable" faith...not hampered by the necessity for clergy, sacraments, or specified structures." (Haddad 1994)

19

leadership took its toll: the second generation did not learn Arabic and a shortage of

Muslim females led to intermarriage. By 1948, the Muslims had adopted Christian names

and the mosque was abandoned. (Abu-Laban 1989; Haddad 1983; Naff 1994)

The early mosques that did succeed bared less resemblance to the masjids in the

Middle East than the American churches down the street. The American mosques quickly

became the social and cultural centers of the Muslim settlements. Like their Christian

counterparts, the mosques hosted weddings, funerals, special dinners, and even white

elephant and bake sales. Women and children would participate in events not available in

their homelands by teaching and attending Sunday schools. Youth groups were organized

to promote intra-faith courtships and marriages. (Abu-Laban 1989; Haddad 1983) The

mosque leadership also became Americanized. Local congregations did their own hiring

and firing of the imams, a practice unheard of in the Middle East where the mosques are

controlled by ministries (Haddad 1983).

The larger role of the mosques required the imams to expand their duties. Prior to

their Americanization, the imams' primary function was to lead the prayers and Friday

sermons. The responsibilities grew to include "the administration and maintenance of the

mosque,...attending to the community's general welfare...representing them in

interreligious functions...(and) lecturing about Islam in churches and schools." (Haddad

1994)

The Americanization of Islam is a phenomenon restricted to the first wave of Arab

Muslim immigrants. They lacked the population, economic, and social status as well as

the formal institutions to prevent the acculturation of the religion.

The arrival of the second wave of immigrants had no impact on Muslim assimilation. Religion played a diminished role in their lives with greater emphasis placed on nationalist and secular issues. The majority are Eid Muslims, attending the mosque only on major holidays. Another indicator of their lack of interest in Islam is the prevalence of interfaith marriages, 66 percent are estimated to have married outside of the religion. (Elkholy 1969)

F. EARLY ARAB-AMERICAN CHRISTIANS

Although the majority of first wavers were Christians, they were not welcomed with open arms into America's churches. The Arab-American Christians followed the liturgy of apostolic churches such as the Antiochan Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Maronite, and Melkite sects.[15]

The Eastern churches survived the transplantation to the United States, but they did not remain unchanged. Many immigrants left the churches, noted for their ornate rites and continued use of ancient languages in their liturgies, in search of more modern services. Before losing all of their parishioners, the churches made some accommodations. The Chaldean and Coptic services gradually ended their practice of gender segregation, English liturgies are available in a number of Orthodox churches, and music is no longer forbidden. (Haddad 1994; Naff 1983)

G. SECULAR ORGANIZATIONS AND THE ARAB-AMERICAN PRESS

Faced with accelerating assimilation, culture conscious first wave immigrants formed a network of social clubs. The organizations' purpose was to provide a forum for

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[15] Appendix B contains descriptions of the Eastern Christian churches.

Arab singles to stem the increasing rate of intermarriage created by a shortage of single

Arab women in the United States and the difficulty and expense of returning home to

marry. Because marrying outside one's religious sect was regarded with the same disdain

of marrying a non-Arab, the membership in the early groups was based upon religious

affiliation.

Besides fulfilling the role of a dating service, the organizations were centers of

charity fundraising. The groups would compete for the prestige of funding the largest

hospital, school, or church in their homelands. They also sponsored similar institutions in

the United States and awarded scholarships to deserving second generation Arab-

Americans.

The closest the early organizations came to political participation was the identity

debate sparked by the creation of Lebanon. A distinct Maronite group supporting an

independent Lebanon with a Maronite dominated government was founded. With that

exception, the Arab-Americans would remain apolitical until 1948. (Naff 1994)

After World War II, the dramatic change in the education levels of arriving

immigrants and the turbulent political landscape of the Middle East led to the founding of

political organizations. The early political groups did not have the impact on U.S. foreign

policy they desired, but they did set important precedents for future organizations. For

the first time, the organizations overcame sectarian allegiance and membership was based

upon common nationality or ethnicity. Also, the groups "initiated the consciousness

raising process" (Naff 1983) among the descendants of the first wave immigrants.

The first Arab language newspaper in the United States was printed in April 1892.

Founded in New York City and using a printing press imported from Egypt, the *Kawkab*

America started an Arab-American enchantment with the printed word. The earliest

papers mirrored the earliest organizations. They were established by the different religious

sects and provided information on social events and news from the homeland. Unlike their

organization counterparts, the papers promoted assimilation by including articles on

adapting to life in the United States.[16]

Between the World Wars, the press played a vital role in the assimilation debate.

The first English language paper for Arab-Americans, *The Syrian World*, appeared in

1926. A non-factional paper, the publication targeted second generation Arab-Americans

and its editorial page became the battlefield of the Americanized and Nativist Arab-

Americans. The debate started with the printing of a letter from Dr. Michael Shadid in

1927. Entitled "Syria for the Syrians," the letter stated Arab-Americans should return to

their homelands to escape prejudice and to help with the modernization of their countries.

The debate the article stimulated lasted for a year with both sides outlining their arguments

on the back page of *The Syrian World*. No resolution appeared possible until Dr. Shadid

submitted a second letter, "Explanation and Retraction." The letter detailed a trip to

Lebanon Dr. Shadid took with his daughter. Meant to be reconnaissance for future

relocation, the trip was a disaster. His daughter hated the living conditions and Dr. Shadid

admitted the country was years behind the United States economically and socially. As a

result of his visit, Dr. Shadid decided to give up "all thoughts of returning to Lebanon."

(Halaby 1988; Sulieman 1988)

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[16] A number of newspaper publishers would also branch out into book production. The books were English primers, American history and cultural guides, and instructions for obtaining U.S. citizenship. Books and periodicals concerning Arab history and culture were non-existent until after World War II. (Arab-American Almanac, 1994; Naff 1983)

After a wartime lull in printing activity, the Arab-American presses reactivated in

the early 1950's. The new journals differed from their predecessors in two ways: politics

became the main subject and English became the norm not the exception. The period also

saw the development of mixed language papers designed to unite American born and

immigrant readers' opinions on the Arab-Israeli conflict and Arab Nationalism. At the

same time, books and periodicals on Arab culture and history began to appear and gain in

popularity. The genre even included works on the Arab-American experience. The press

shifted from a promoter of assimilation to a preserver of Arab cultural and political

identity. (Arab-American Almanac 1994)

H. CONCLUSION

Although many believe Arab immigration is a recent phenomenon, the first Arab-

Americans left the Ottoman Empire for America's streets of gold in the late 1800's.

Those arrivals, referred to as the first wave, were predominantly single, Christian males

from what is today Lebanon and Syria. They embraced the institutions and culture

generated by the American version of constitutional democracy. They bettered their

economic standings within their own lifetimes and ensured their children would have the

education and modern conveniences they went without. They assimilated.

The second wave of immigrants arrived between 1948 and 1967. Originating from

all of the Arab nations, these immigrants were likely to be Western educated professionals

seeking economic and social freedoms no longer available in the Middle East due to the

Arab-Israeli conflict and the nationalist and socialist revolutions sweeping the region.

More culture conscious than their predecessors, their adaptation to life in the United

States is better described as integration than assimilation. Their professional standing and

education ensured quick civic and social incorporation, yet they maintained the secular manifestations of their Arab heritage such as language skills and interest in homeland affairs.

The following chapter begins with the migration of the third wave. Relaxed immigration quotas and the Six Day War in 1967 mark a great change in the type and number of Arab immigrants arriving in the United States: they are younger, poorer, and Muslim. They outnumber their predecessors and they are well on their way to establishing a strong Arab-American community of Muslim faith in the United States.

III. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE ARAB-AMERICANS

A. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The third wave of immigrants initially mimicked the educational and cultural profile of the second wave arrivals: male, university educated, secularized Muslims from the professional classes. By 1970, family unification, not occupational skills, became the basis for awarding visas and the number of Arab immigrants increased while their qualifications decreased. Along with wives and children came the unskilled brothers and . sisters of prior immigrants. The poverty and destruction created by the 1973 War and subsequent Middle Eastern conflicts such as the Lebanese Civil War and the Iran-Iraq War also affected the immigration pool; Arabs, previously content in their homelands, sought escape from the devastation by seeking refugee status or entrance through family members.

This chapter, constructed from data from the 1990 U.S. Census,[17] is intended to provide a factual account of the contemporary Arab-American community. Aside from detailing the migration pattern of the third wave, it will answer the questions, how many Arab-Americans are there, where do they live, what occupations do they hold, how many speak English, and what is their financial status?

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[17] The statistics from the 1990 census are not perfect. The Census Bureau admits to discrepancies in minority reporting. For example, the Arab-American population is listed over 800,000 strong by the census. Literature on the community estimates the community's size between two and three million. (Arab-American Almanac 1994; Naff 1994; Abu-Laban 1994). Ambiguous questions are to blame for the discrepancy. The census data provides only a "snapshot" of the Arab-Americans. 1990 was the first year the ethnic group was included in the survey.

The Arab-American community is an amalgamation of the descendants of the pioneer immigrants, the second wave migrants and their offspring, and the recent arrivals. To demonstrate the differences between the community and the newer arrivals, the Arab-American aggregate is contrasted to immigrants arriving between 1980 and 1990. Furthermore, to gain perspective on the Arab-Americans affluence, educational attainment, and language abilities, they are compared to other American ethnic groups.

B. CURRENT MIGRATION PATTERN

Two factors contributed to the increased immigration of Arabs after 1965. First, the quota system favoring European immigrants was abolished with the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, and second, Israel's victory in the Six Day War created a chain reaction of displacement and unrest in the Middle East. The combination convinced record numbers of Arabs to leave the region and improve their lives in the United States as Figures 3-1 through 3-3 detail.[18]

Most displaced Palestinians fled to neighboring Arab countries but a substantial number decided to join relatives in the United States. The Palestinians that migrated to the countries created border disturbances and displaced the native populations. Increased military skirmishes and urbanization pressures convinced some Lebanese and Jordanians to leave. Lebanese migration was also affected by a civil war and subsequent Israeli invasions of the country. (S Abraham 1983)

---

[18] The differences in the countries included in Figure 3-3 is due to a change in the Immigration and Naturalization Services' (INS) method of immigrant classification. From 1986 on, the INS added the categories Other Asian and Other African and deleted a number of smaller countries.

The Chaldeans began their exodus after the 1968 Iraqi regime change. They did not face direct persecution from the new government but found themselves caught in the Iraqi Kurds battle for autonomy. The Iran-Iraq war added substantially to the pressure to migrate.

With the exception of the Yemenis fleeing military occupation and an ongoing civil war, Arabs departing countries on the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa did not encounter such dramatic push factors. They were more likely pulled to the United States for economic and educational reasons. (S Abraham 1983)

Recently, the Middle East has been relatively peaceful but a number of Arab countries have been on the verge of economic and political collapse. Pushed by internal unrest and pulled by the lure of American prosperity, over 20,000 Arab immigrants continue to arrive annually in the United States.

One in four immigrants arriving since 1990 is Lebanese. Egyptians and Palestinians each comprise 20 percent of the annual total. Following the Gulf War, Iraqi immigration has jumped to 15 percent. The remaining 20 percent is split between Syrians and Other Arabs.[19]

Geographic concentrations of the Arab-Americans have developed. The largest population exists in California with substantial numbers of Arab-Americans living in the Los Angeles basin and the San Francisco Bay Area. New York is a close second, and the third largest Arab-American population is in the state of Michigan. These states alone

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[19] Appendix A includes immigration statistics from 1869 to 1994.

Number of Immigrants
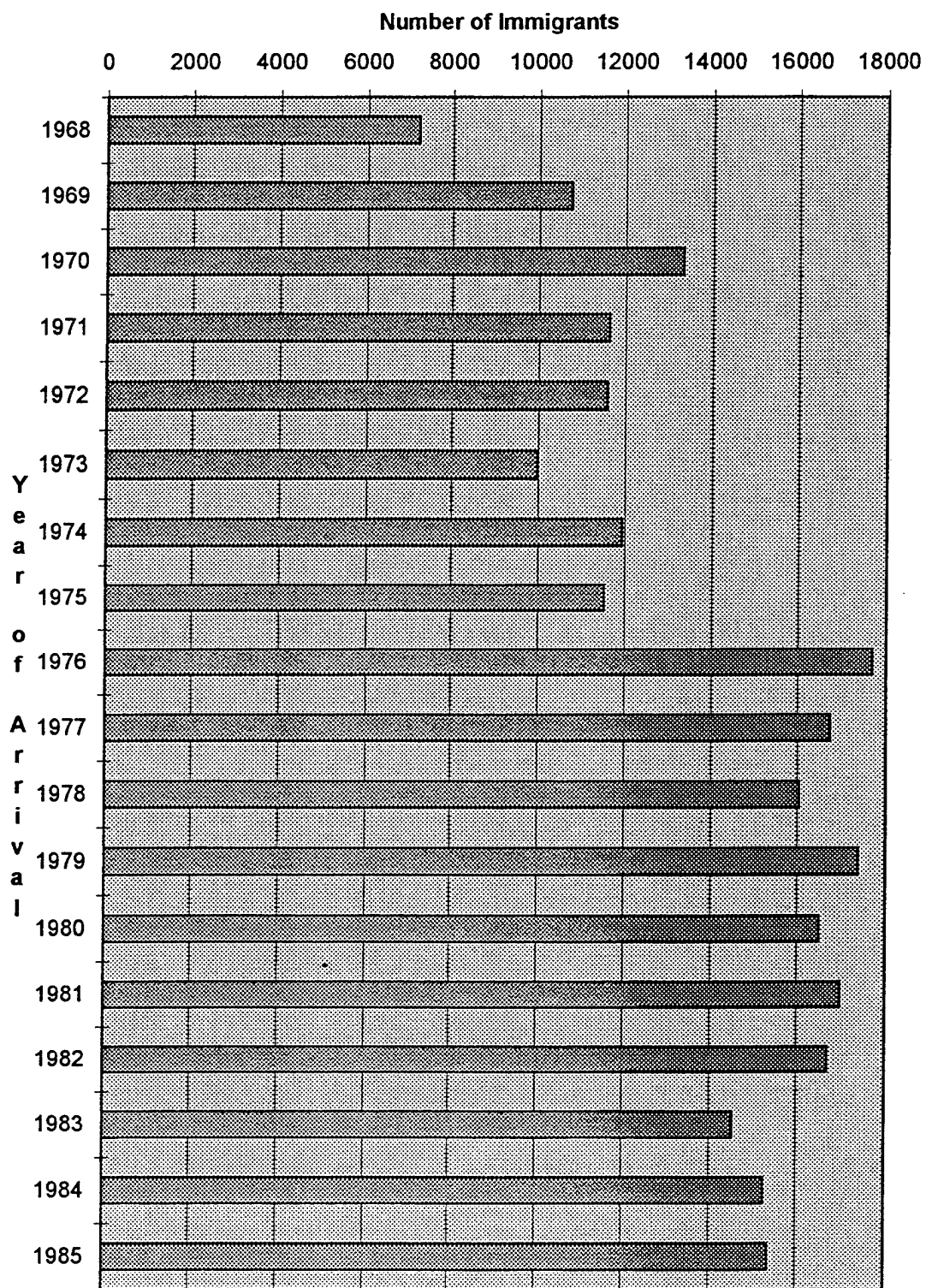
Figure 3-1. Arab Immigration from 1968 to 1985. After Orfalea
1988.

Origins of Arab Immigrants, 1968-85.

North Africa
6%

Syria
10%

Arabian Peninsula
6%

Egypt
20%

Lebanon
22%

Iraq
16%

Jordan
20%

Origins of Arab Immigrants, 1986-94.

Morocco
5%

Syria
12%

Arabian Peninsula
11%

Egypt
18%

Lebanon
24%

Iraq
12

Jordan
18%
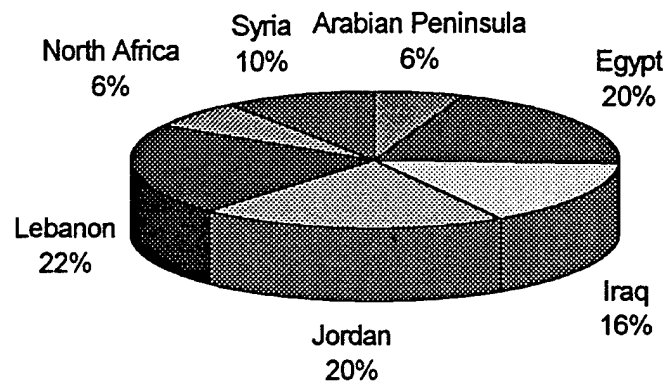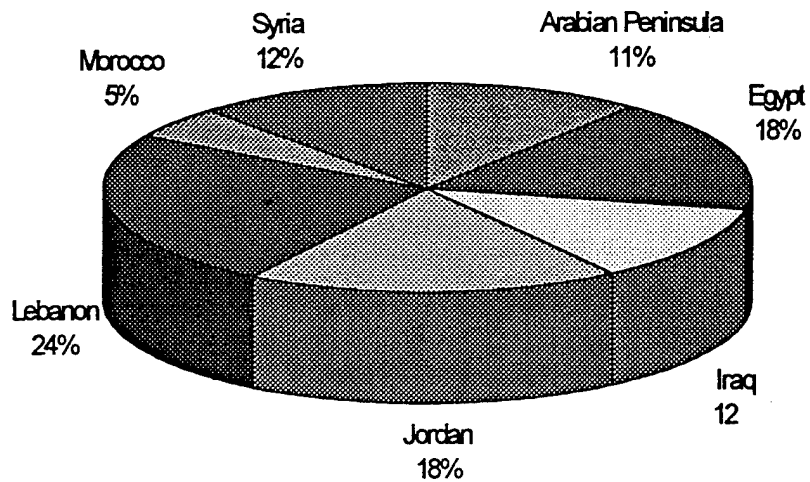
Figure 3-2. Origins Of Arab-Immigrants, 1968-94. After Orfalea 1988 and INS.

31

Number of Immigrants

| | 0 | 5000 | 10000 | 15000 | 20000 | 25000 |

Y 1986

e 1987

a 1988
r
1989
o
f 1990

A 1991
r
r 1992
i
v 1993
a
l 1994
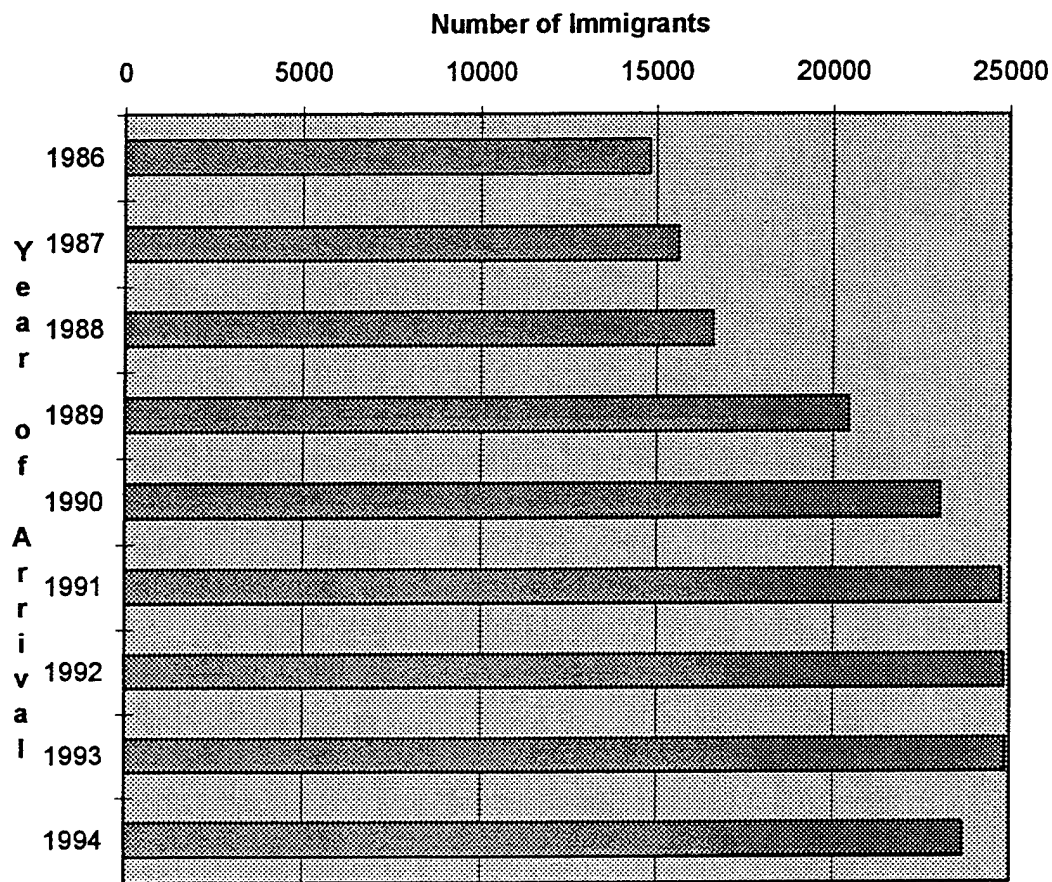
Figure 3-3. Arab Immigration from 1986 to 1994. After INS.

are home to one third of all Arab-Americans. A breakdown of Arab-American population

by state and nationality is included in Appendix C.

The Detroit metropolitan area has the largest concentration of Arab-Americans.

The Detroit community started to grow with the birth of the auto industry and death of

peddling. Unskilled immigrant workers flocked to the auto plants for the high wages and

set hours. (Naff 1994)

Distinct residential patterns exist within the Detroit area. Arab-American

neighborhoods reflect religious and national homogeneity that extends as deep as town of

origin and religious sect. The population density of the Arab-Americans varies through out the city. Muslims, however, are concentrated in three of the four most densely populated areas and the Arab Christians are more likely to be dispersed in the suburbs. In addition, "some communities function as 'primary' receiving areas for new immigrants and feed into the development of other areas." (S Abraham 1983) Once financially and culturally secure, the new immigrants "spillover" into neighboring districts. (S Abraham 1983)

The Arab-Americans have settled exclusively in urban areas: over 48 percent of · the Arab-American population can be found in twenty major cities. New York City and Los Angeles possess the second and third highest populations of Arab-Americans. Figure 3-4 and Table 3-1 detail the Arab-American settlement pattern.
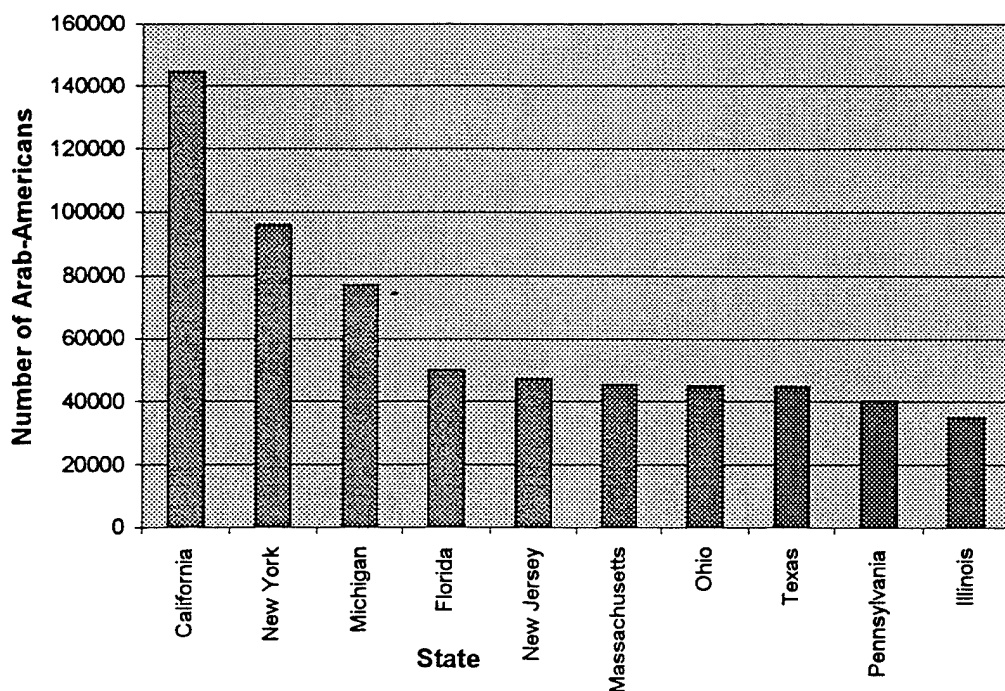
Figure 3-4. Ten States with the Highest Arab-American Population.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

Metropolitan Area	Arab-American Population	Percentage of Total Arab-American Population
Detroit	61065	7.0
New York City	58347	6.7
Los Angeles	56345	6.5
Washington DC	28148	3.2
Chicago	26770	3.1
Boston	22391	2.6
Anaheim-Santa Ana, CA	15662	1.8
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	15580	1.8
Houston	15389	1.8
Cleveland	14005	1.6
San Diego	13055	1.5
Pittsburgh	12141	1.4
San Francisco	11973	1.4
Miami	11344	1.3
Philadelphia	10345	1.2
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	10291	1.2
Nassau-Suffolk NY	8837	1.0
Oakland	8668	1.0
Minneapolis- St Paul	8155	0.9
Phoenix	7719	0.9

Table 3-1. The 20 Cities with the Highest Arab-American Population. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-2-1.

34

C. SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF ARAB-AMERICANS

1. Nationalities

The Arab-American community echoes the national diversity of the Arab world

and immigrants from every Arab country are present in the United States. The Arab-

American population, however, consists primarily of five nationalities. In order of size

they are the Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians, Palestinians, and Iraqis.[20]   Figure 3-5

illustrates the community composition as of the 1990 Census.
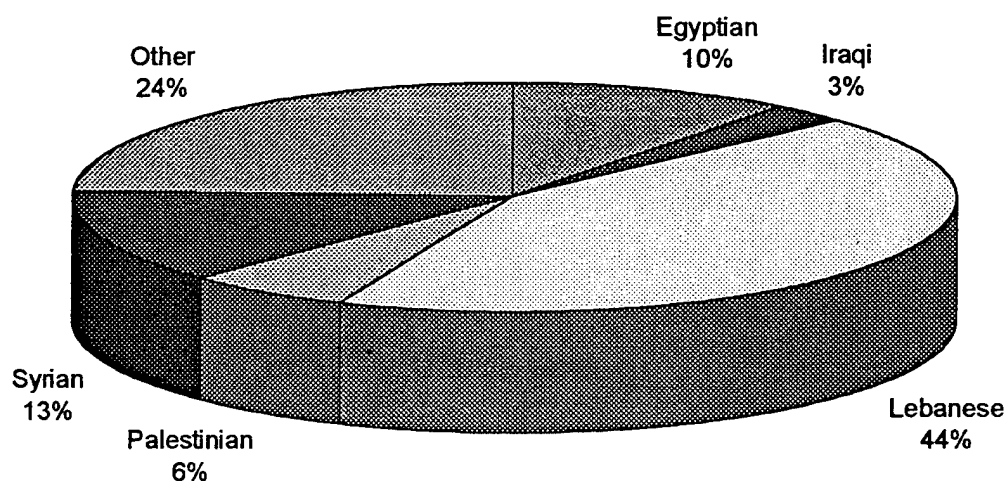
Figure 3-5. Composition of the Arab-American Community by Nationality. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

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[20] The remaining nationalities are consolidated under the label Other. They include persons from the Arabian Peninsula countries of Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates and the North African countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, and Djibouti.

2. Gender and Age

The gender and age composition of the Arab-Americans reflects their status as a newer immigrant group.[21] Males comprise 54 percent of the Arab-American population, five percent higher than the U.S. average. In addition, the median age of Arab-Americans at 30.2 is 1.8 years younger than national median. The male to female ratio and the median age of Arab-Americans varies with nationality. The Syrians and Lebanese, who have the longest presence in the United States, possess the lowest ratios and highest median ages. Gender and age statistics are summarized in Table 3-2.

Nationality	Total Population	Males	Females	Male to Female Sex Ratio	Median Age
Egyptian	73097	42424	30673	138.3	31.7
Iraqi	20657	11854	8803	134.7	30.3
Lebanese	309578	161776	147802	109.5	32.3
Palestinian	44651	26224	18427	142.3	27.1
Syrian	95155	49023	46132	106.3	33.7
Other	173253	104291	68962	151.2	25.9

Table 3-2. Gender and Age Statistics of Arab-Americans. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

3. Nativity and Citizenship

The majority of Arab-Americans were born in the United States, yet only the Lebanese and Syrian nationalities have larger American born than foreign born populations. The Egyptians, Iraqis, Palestinians, and Other Arab communities are dominated by foreign born members. This comes as no surprise considering the immigration of Arabs other than Syrians and Lebanese commenced after World War II.

---

[21] Seventy-five percent of foreign born Arab-Americans arrived in the United States after 1964. The gender and age composition of the community reflect the universal immigration pattern of males and younger persons being the most likely to migrate.

Of the foreign born Arab-Americans, 49 percent have become U.S. citizens, with the rate of naturalization directly related to date of arrival in the United States: 79 percent of immigrants arriving before 1980 have become citizens as compared to 21 percent of the 1980 to1990 arrivals. Table 3-3 details the Arab-American nativity and citizenship statistics and Figure 3-6 highlights the different composition of the American and foreign born populations.

Group	American Born	Foreign Born	Entered US 1980-1990	Entered US before 1980	Naturalized Citizen	Not a Citizen
Egyptian	22541	50556	25234	25322	28540	22016
Iraqi	6296	14359	6336	8023	7543	6816
Lebanese	230736	78842	38602	40240	40150	38692
Palestinian	19252	25399	11487	13912	14630	10769
Syrian	72829	22226	11366	10860	11047	11179
Other	72921	100332	57335	42997	40886	59446
Total	424575	291714	150360	141354	142796	148918

Table 3-3. Nativity and Citizenship Statistics by Nationality. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

4. Educational Attainment

The overwhelming majority, 82.4 percent, of Arab-Americans[22] complete high school and over one third of those persons later receive an undergraduate degree or higher. Both percentages are considerably greater than the national averages of 75.2 and 20.3, respectively.

Within the community, educational success or failure has a strong correlation[23] to gender and place of birth. Only 78.7 percent of Arab-American women and 78.8 percent of foreign born Arab-Americans complete high school.

---

[22] Educational attainment is computed for those persons 25 years or older.

[23] Any mention of correlation or impact of gender, nationality, place of birth, or year of arrival in the United States on a particular statistic has been substantiated through analyses of variance (ANOVAs).

Composition of the American Born Arab-American Community

Other
17%

Egyptian
5%

Iraqi
1%

Syrian
17%

Palestinian
5%

Lebanese
55%

Composition of the Foreign Born Arab-American Community

Other
34%

Egyptian
17%

Iraqi
5%

Syrian
8%

Palestinian
9%

Lebanese
27%
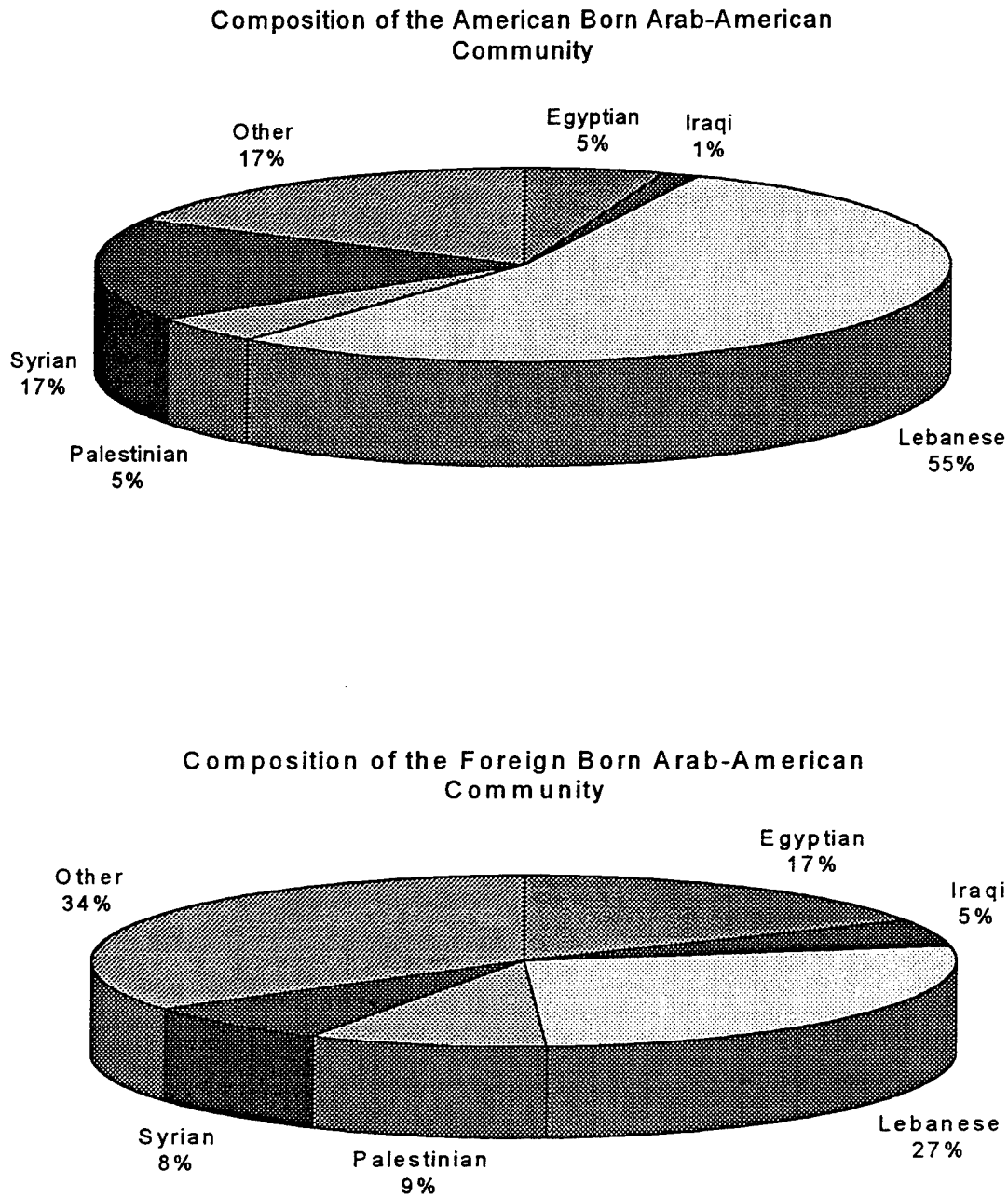
Figure 3-6. Composition of the Arab-American Community by Nativity.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

38

The statistics make it impossible to discern the educational attainment of specific generations. For example, the question how many lower educated members of the third wave are sending their children to college must remain unanswered. An interesting fact did emerge while researching the question: Arab-American children attend private[24] schools at a higher rate than the national average. Perhaps a reflection of their relative affluence, attempts at cultural preservation, or commitment to quality education, 19 percent of Arab-American students attend private elementary or high schools. The national figure, is a mere nine percent.

5. Language Abilities

When the English capabilities of the community are examined, it is apparent an overwhelming majority of Arab-Americans, regardless of generation, obtain English competency. English proficiency varies with place of birth and year of arrival. The significant difference in competency[25] between American born and foreign born persons is illustrated in Figure 3-7. The census data also indicated increased English capabilities corresponded to increased time spent in the United States. As Figure 3-8 demonstrates, the ability to speak English "very well" was more prevalent in Arab-Americans arriving before 1980 than those arriving between 1980 and 1990.

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[24] The data does not distinguish between secular and parochial schools.

[25] According to Census Bureau procedure, persons indicating they spoke a language other than English were then questioned on their perceived ability to speak English and place themselves in one of the following categories: "Very Well," "Well," "Not Well," or "Not at All."

The number of Arab-Americans living in Linguistically Isolated Households[26] (LIH) follows the same pattern. American born persons are less likely to live in an LIH than an Arab immigrant, and an inverse relationship exists between the number of immigrants residing in LIHs and the number of years an immigrant lived in the United States. Again, Figures 3-7 and 3-8 portray the trend.

6. Labor Force Statistics

Two-thirds of Arab-Americans over the age of 16 are members of the workforce with six percent remaining unemployed. Although both percentages are within one point of the national average, closer examination reveals startling variation in the occupational distribution of the Arab-Americans and the aggregate U.S. population. The pie charts in Figure 3-9 illustrate the differences. Over one-third of Arab-Americans are considered managers or professionals while barely a quarter of the overall population occupy equivalent positions. Arab-Americans are also more likely to be employed in technical, sales, and administrative vocations. Relatively few Arab-Americans are active in the service, agriculture, and production and labor sectors.

---

[26] A linguistically isolated household is defined by the Census Bureau as "a household in which no person age 14 years or over speaks only English and no person age 14 years or over who speaks a language other than English speaks English 'Very Well.'" (Census CP-2-1 1990)
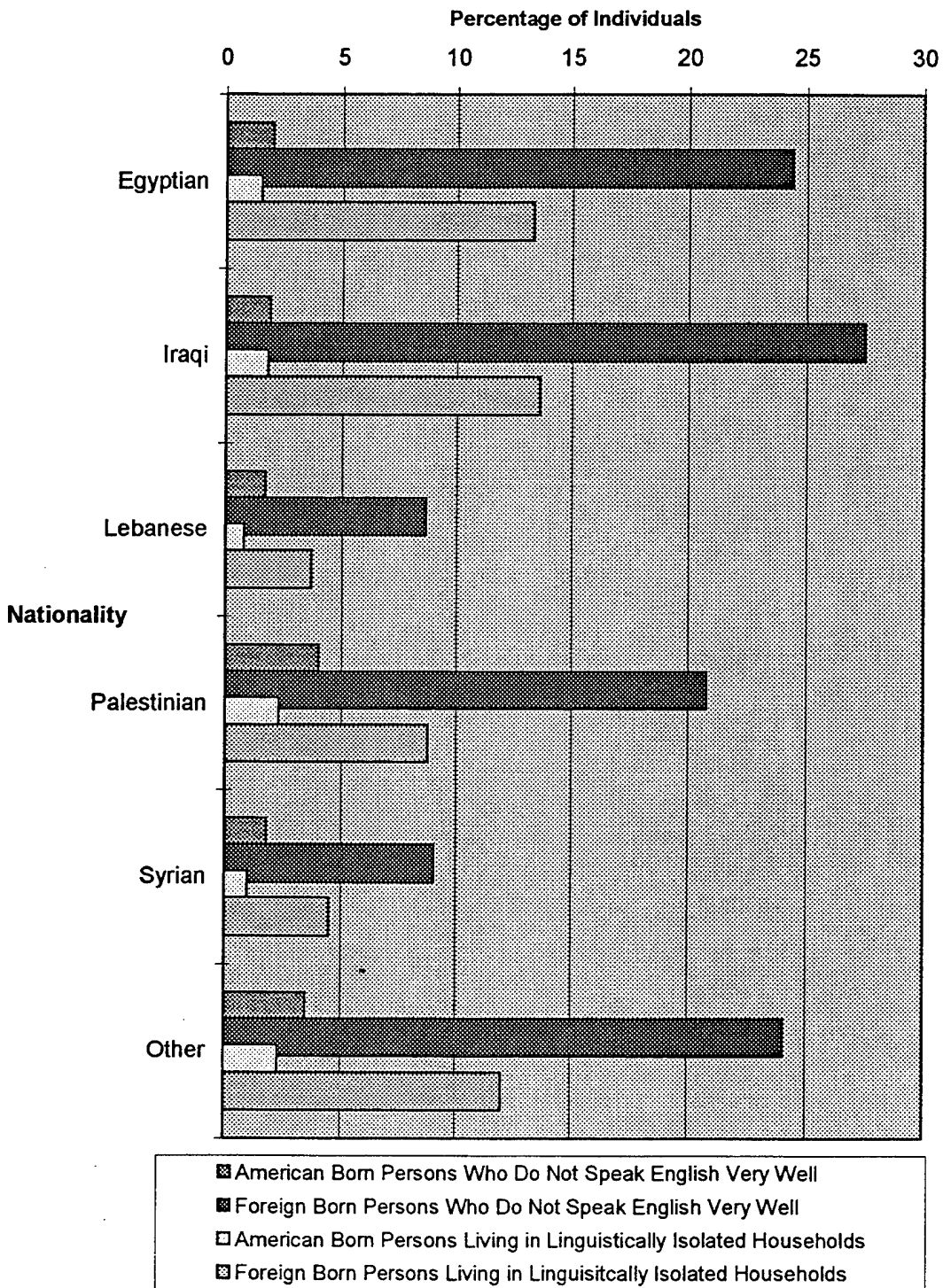
Figure 3-7. English Speaking Abilities of Persons of Arab
Ancestry. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

Percentage of Individuals

Legend:
- ▨ Does Not Speak "Very Well"; Arrived Before 1980
- ▨ Does Not Speak "Very Well"; Arrived 1980-1990
- ☐ Living in Linguistically Isolated Household; Arrived Before 1980
- ▨ Living in Linguistically Isolated Household; Arrived 1980-1990
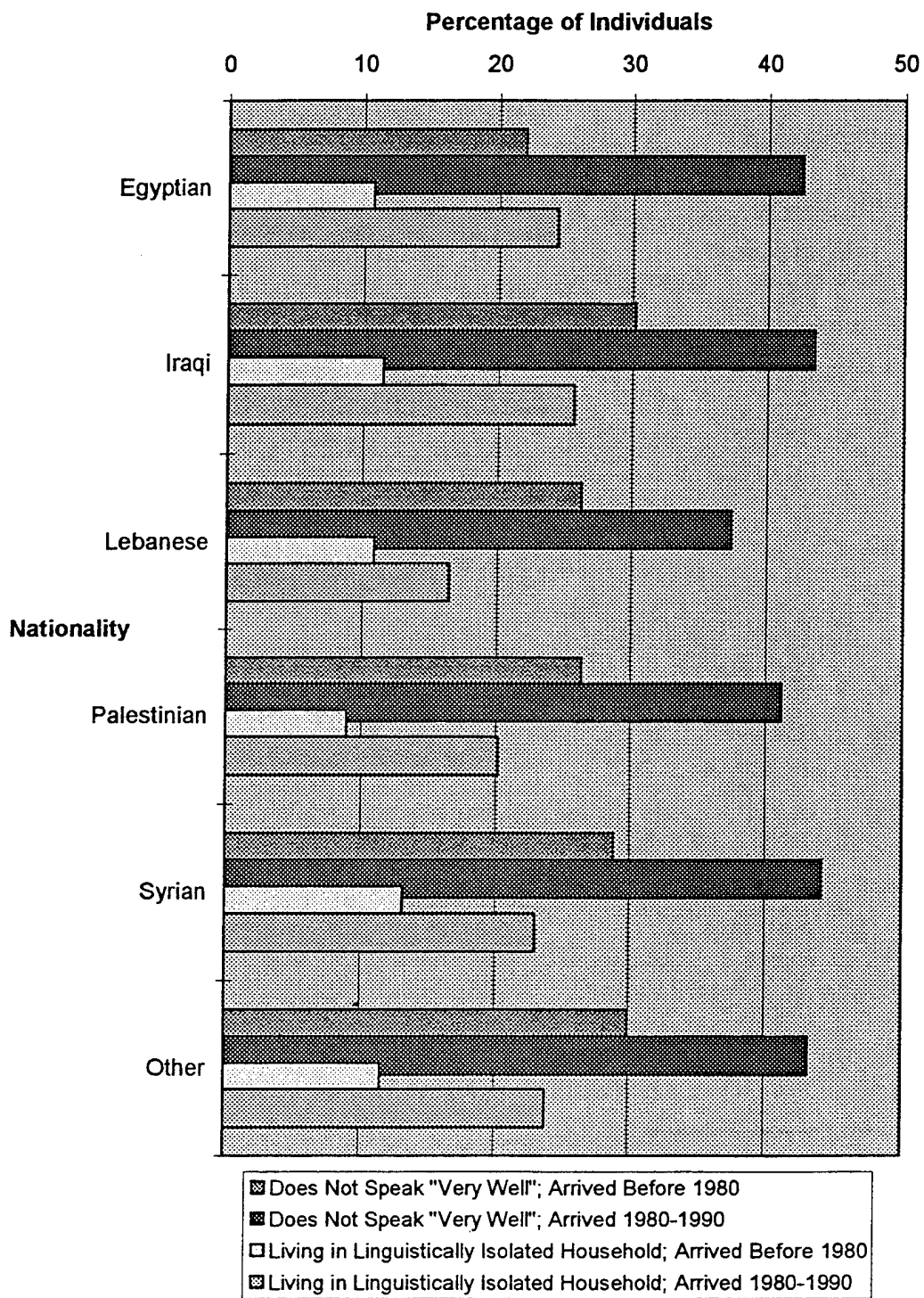
**Figure 3-8. English Speaking Capabilities of Arab Immigrants.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.**

Arab-American occupations vary by location. Chicago and Detroit have the highest proportion of blue collar workers. In fact, 16 percent of Detroit Arab-Americans are involved with production compared to the Arab-American aggregate of 7.5 percent. At just under 23 percent, the metropolitan areas of Washington D.C. and Anaheim have the largest percentage of executives. Further variations of Arab-American careers by metro area are detailed in Table 3-4.

Metropolitan Area	Professional	Retail/ Sales	Administrative Support	Service	Executive/ Managerial
Detroit	6.8 %	12.3 %	12.3 %	7.2 %	8.9 %
New York City	11.1 %	15.2 %	15.2 %	7.3 %	15.4 %
Los Angeles	14.8 %	11.8 %	11.8 %	5.0 %	12.0 %
Washington D.C.	18.0 %	13.3 %	13.3 %	5.2 %	22.9 %
Chicago	10.5 %	14.5 %	12.9 %	5.4 %	6.2 %
Boston	14.7 %	11.8 %	12.6 %	9.9 %	17.6 %
Anaheim, CA	6.5 %	23.8 %	15.0 %	2.9 %	22.5 %
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	13.4 %	10.6 %	15.6 %	7.2 %	14.9 %
Houston	18.2 %	14.7 %	9.1 %	7.8 %	14.6 %
Cleveland	12.5 %	19.9 %	9.9 %	11.7 %	7.4 %

Table 3-4. The Top Five Occupations for Arab-Americans in the Top Ten Metropolitan Areas. From El-Badry 1994.

7. Income Levels

An analysis of income levels revealed the relative affluence of Arab-Americans compared to national average. The mean income of Arab-American families of $53,337 is almost $10,000 higher than national mean of $43,803. The difference can not be

Occupational Distribution of Arab-Americans

Production &
Repair
7%

Operator/ Fabricator/
Laborer
8%

Agriculture & Mining
1%

Managerial/
Professional
36%

Service
11%

Technical, Sales, &
Administration
36%
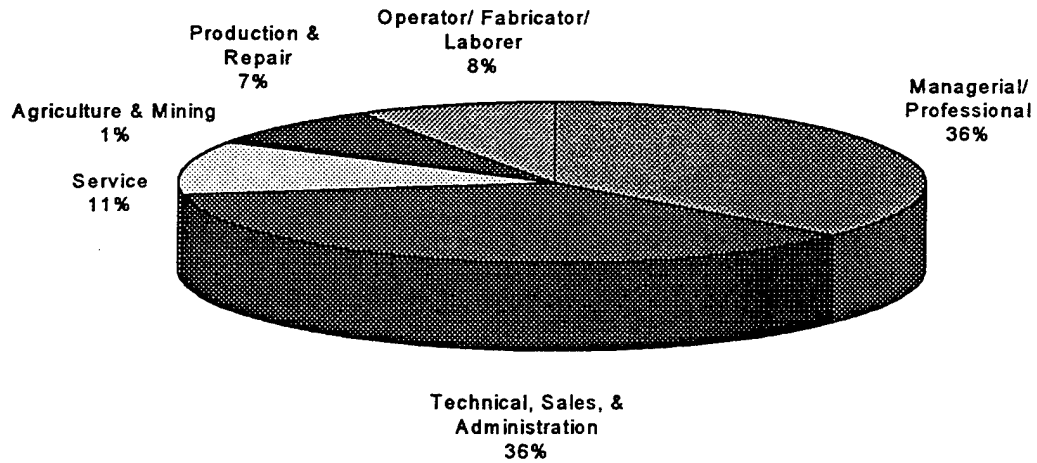
Occupational Distribution of All Persons

Operator/ Fabricator/
Laborer
15%

Production &
Repair
11%

Managerial/Professional
26%

Agriculture &
Mining
3%

Service
13%

Technical, Sales, &
Administration
32%
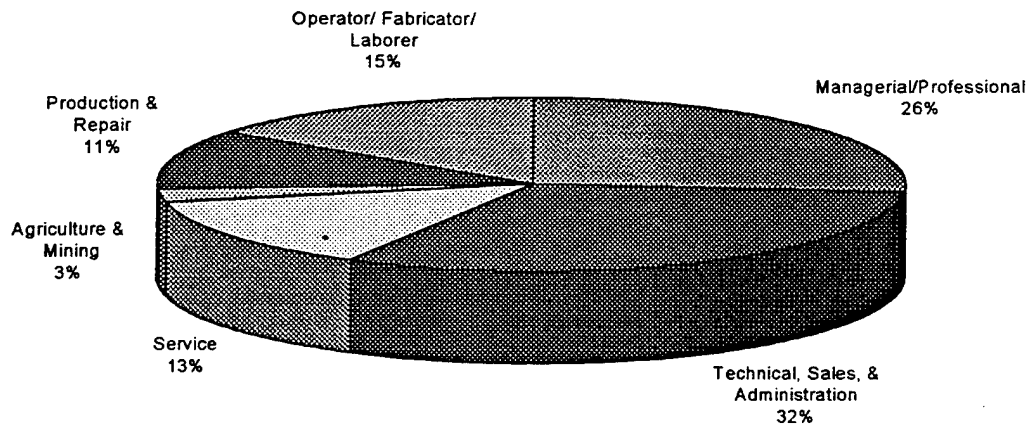
Figure 3-9. Comparison of Occupational Distribution. After Bureau of the Census
1990 <u>CP-3-2</u>

44

explained away by larger families with more contributors, per capita incomes of Arab-Americans are also higher, $17, 348 compared to $14,420.[27]

Within the community, families with an American born head of the household are more financially secure than their foreign born counterparts. Yet, as Figure 3-10 illustrates, the converse was true for individuals. Arab-Americans are not immune to economic hardship. Eleven percent of families, one point higher than the national average, and 26 percent of unrelated individuals, two points higher than the national average, live below the poverty level.[28] Despite the high rate of impoverishment, only 5.3 percent of the families receive public assistance.

Poverty levels and public assistance vary with nationality and place of birth as Figure 3-11 depicts. Nationality has no discernible impact on income and poverty levels, but plays a determining role in whether a family receives public assistance. Over nine percent of Iraqis receive government aid, followed by 6.6 percent of Other Arabs. The remainder of the nationalities have between 4.5 and 5.9 percent of their families receiving public assistance. Except for the Egyptians, immigrants collect government aid in numbers higher than their American born counterparts.

---

[27] Labor statistics also reveal the national percentage for having two or more workers in the family is two points higher than the Arab-American percentage.

[28] For the 1990 Census, poverty thresholds dependent on the number and age of family members were established. Each Arab-American family's income was compared against the appropriate threshold to determine what percentage lived in poverty.

Income

$0 $10,000 $20,000 $30,000 $40,000 $50,000 $60,000 $70,000

Nationality

Egyptian

Iraqi

Lebanese

Palestinian

Syrian

Other

▨ Mean Family Income of American Born ▨ Mean Family Income of Foreign Born
☐ Per Capita Income of American Born   ▨ Per Capita Income of Foreign Born
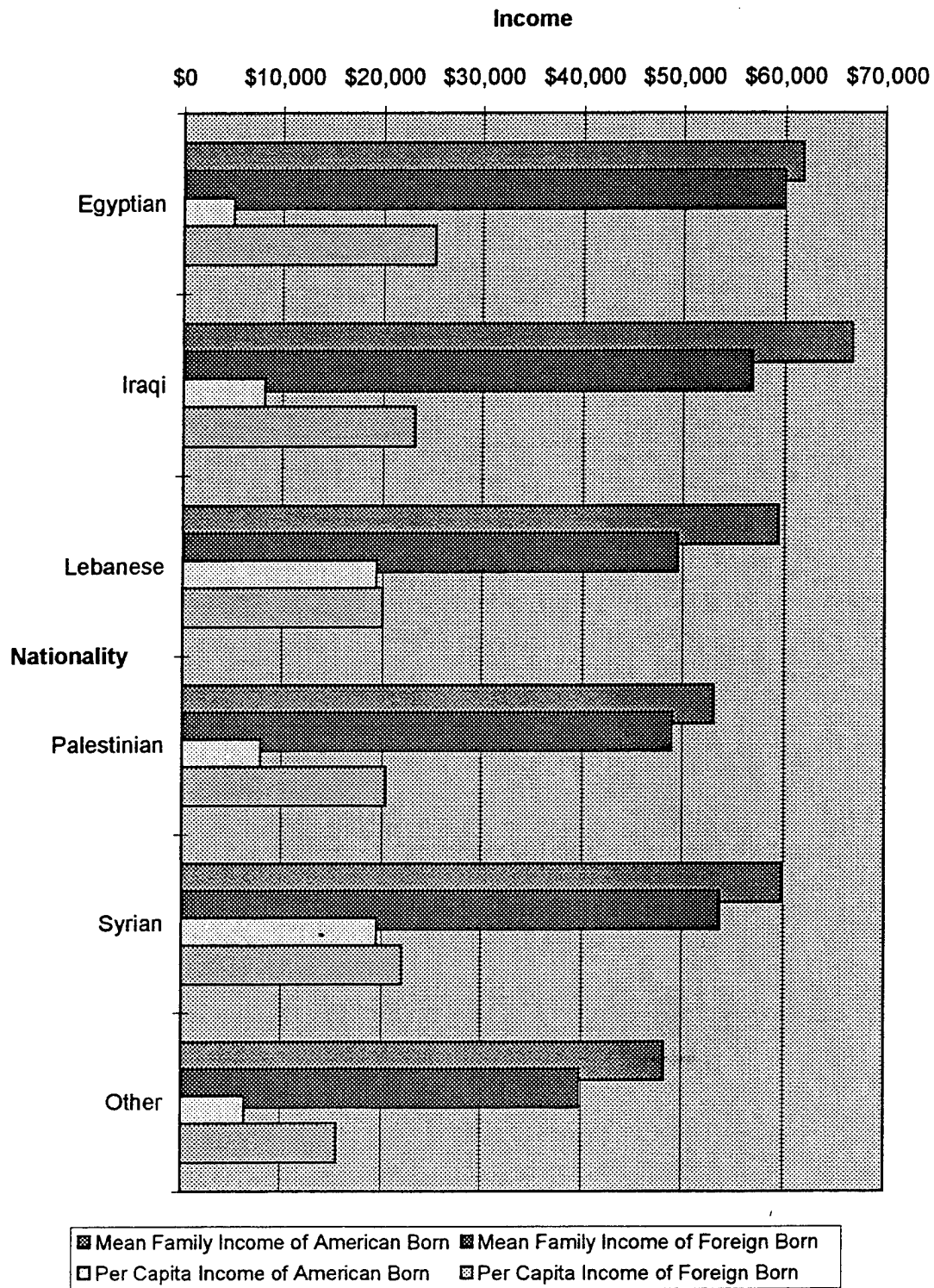
Figure 3-10. Income Levels of Persons of Arab Ancestry. After
Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.
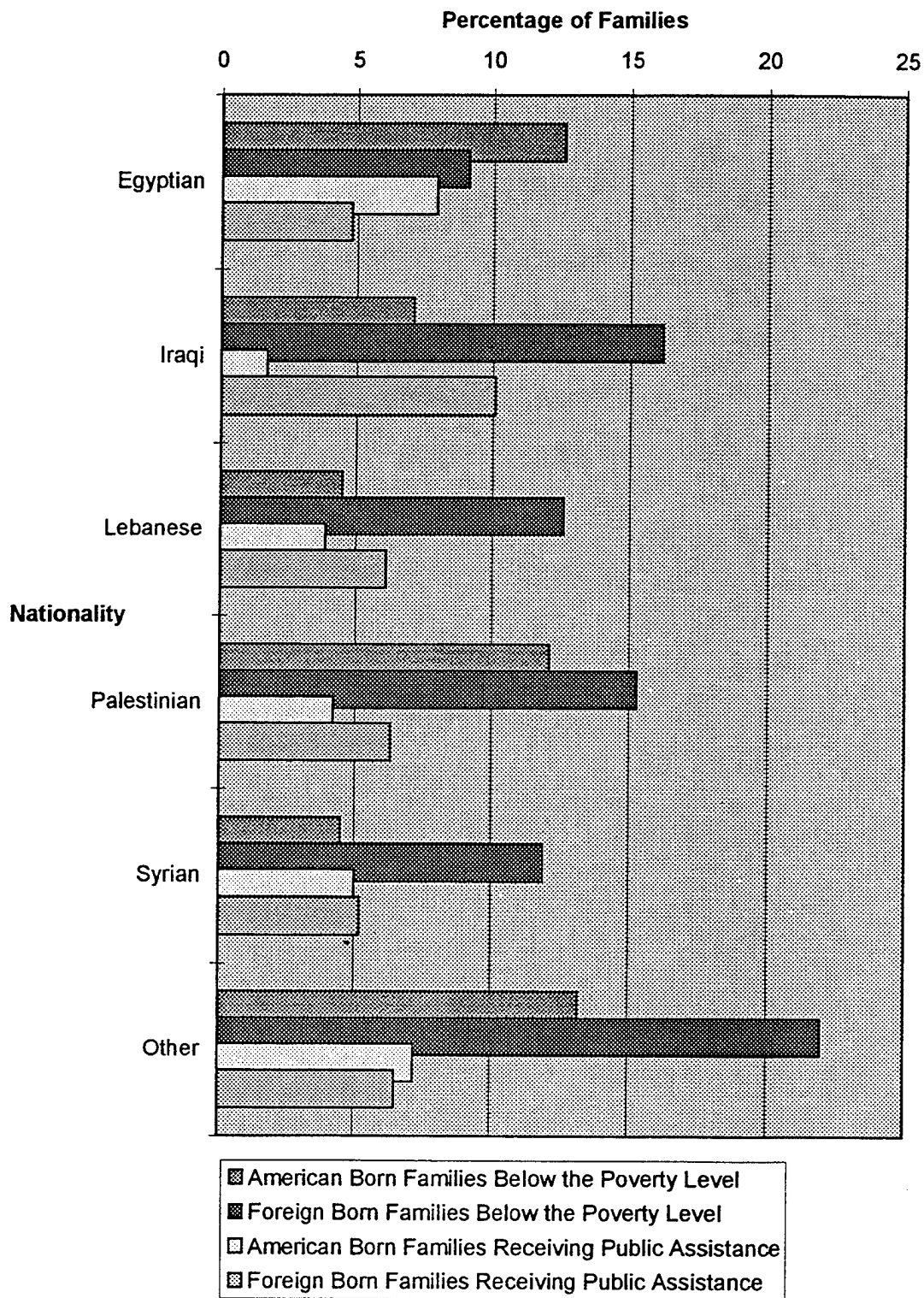
Figure 3-11. Economic Hardship of Arab American Families.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 **CP-3-2**.

Despite what the poverty statistics suggested about more recent arrivals being in greater financial need, a higher percentage of immigrants coming before 1980 accepted public assistance than those who arrived after 1980.

D. PROFILE OF ARAB IMMIGRANTS ARRIVING BETWEEN 1980 AND 1990

The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 did more than abolish unfair quotas; it opened the floodgates for unskilled immigrants to enter the United States. The act altered the demographics of the United States and the Arab-American community. Recent Arab immigrants have lower income levels, higher poverty levels, and higher unemployment than their predecessors and the average American. Surprisingly, their education levels are higher than the Arab-American and American aggregate and the occupations they fill parallel their Arab-American predecessors. Table 3-5 and Figures 3-12 and 3-13 summarize the economic and social standing of the newest Arab-American arrivals.

	Arab-Americans Arriving btwn 1980-1990	Arab-American Aggregate	National Aggregate
Mean Family Income	$35,397	$53,337	$43,803
Per Capita Income	$12,339	$17,348	$14,420
Living below the Poverty Level	22.1%	10.9%	10%
Completed High School	82.5%	82.4%	75.2%
Completed BA/BS or Higher	43.6%	36.3%	20%
Receiving Public Assistance	4.2%	5.3%	7.5%
Unemployed	8.6%	5.9%	6.3%
Median Age	28.8 years	30.2 years	33 years
Male to Female Ratio	175.9	123.3	95

Table 3-5. Comparison of Arab-American Immigrants to the Arab-American and National Average. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-2-1 and CP-3-2.

48
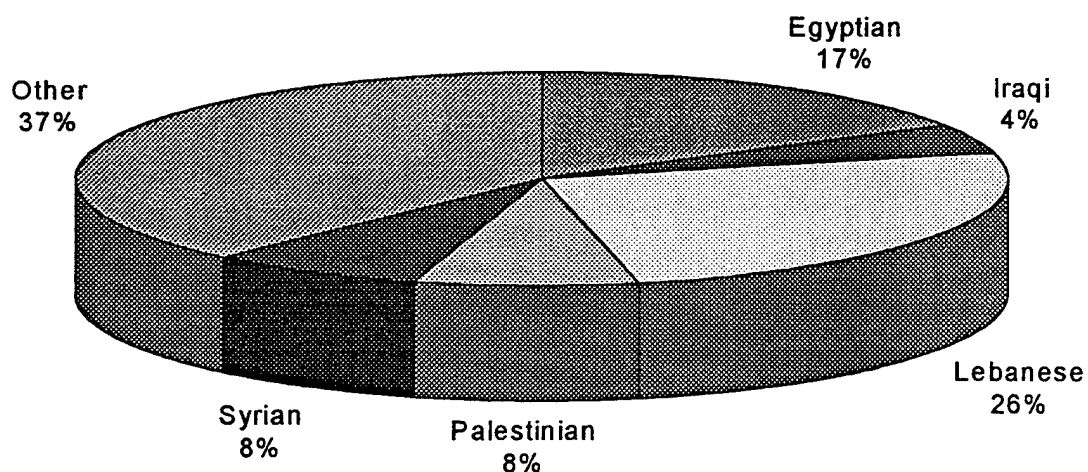
Figure 3-12. Composition of the Arab-American Immigrants Arriving Between 1980 and 1990. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.
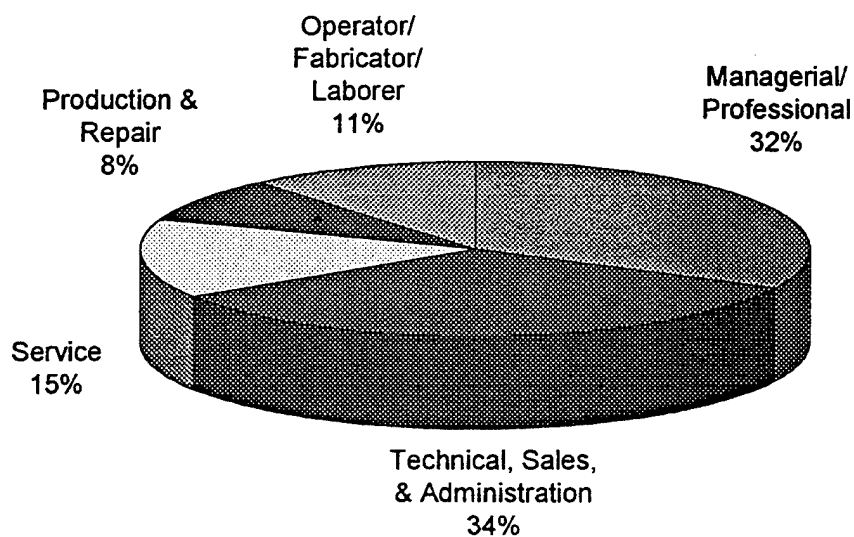
Figure 3-13. Occupational Distribution of Arab-Americans Arriving Between 1980 and 1990. After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-3-2.

E. COMPARISION OF ARAB-AMERICANS TO OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

To place the Arab-American data within perspective, certain statistics were compared with other ethnic groups. The selected groups represent European, Asian, and Hispanic ancestries.[28] All Persons, the Census Bureau label for the national aggregate, American Indians, and African Americans are also included.

As Table 3-6 indicates, the Arab-Americans consistently place in the top half of the rankings and within one or two places of All Persons.[29] Their language skills are higher than their Asian[30] counterparts and the Hispanic representatives. They lag behind other Asian groups for educational attainment, but still remain in the above the fiftieth percentile. The same is true for the economic comparisons.

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[28] Asian ancestries may appear to be over represented, however, the inclusion of Indians and Iranians was necessary because Americans confuse the groups with Arabs on a routine basis.

[29] Graphs for each category are provided in Appendix D.

[30] Although a number of Arabs are from North Africa, the language and culture originated in Southwest Asia.

Ethnicity	Does Not Speak English Very Well	Living in Linguistically Isolated Household	Less than a 5th Grade Education	Completed High School	Completed BA/BS or Higher
African American	2	2	8	11	10
All Persons	4	5	5	8	8
American Indian	5	4	9. . . .	10	12
Arab	*6*	*6*	*6*	*6*	*4*
Chinese	12	12	11	9	3
German	1	1	1	5	6
Indian	7	7	7	4	1
Iranian	9	9	3	1	2
Italian	3	3	3	78	7
Japanese	8	8	2	3	5
Mexican	11	11	13	14	13
Puerto Rican	10	10	10	13	11
Vietnamese	13	13	12	12	9

Ethnicity	Mean Family Income	Per Capita Income	Families Below the Poverty Level	Unemployment Rate	Receive Public Assistance
African American	11	9	11	12	11
All Persons	8	8	5	8	7
American Indian	12	12	12	13	10
Arab	*4*	*5*	*7*	*6*	*6*
Chinese	5	7	8	3	8
German	7	6	3	2	2
Indian	1	3	4	5	3
Iranian	3	2	6	7	5
Italian	6	4	2	4	3
Japanese	2	1	1	1	1
Mexican	10	13	9	10	9
Puerto Rican	13	11	13	11	13
Vietnamese	9	10	10	9	12

Table 3-6. Ranking of Cultural and Economic Indicators by Selected Ethnic Groups, 1 being the highest and thirteen the lowest. After Bureau of the Census 1990 <u>CP-2-1</u> and <u>CP-3-2</u>.

F. CONCLUSION

Combining the migration profile of the first and second wave in Chapter II with this chapter's data, it is possible to contrast the composition and motivations of the three waves. Table 3-7 encapsulates those differences. Despite the increased variation in nationality of the immigrants, the largest group to arrive from Lebanon. Present immigration statutes favor family chain migration and the Lebanese have the largest community of potential sponsors.

Arab-American settlement mirrors the settlement pattern of all recent immigrants. A majority reside in metropolitan areas in one of six states: California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois. (Morgan 1995) Substantial Arab-American enclaves also exist in Michigan, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. The Detroit area has the highest concentration of Arab-Americans and within its confines exist distinct neighborhoods reflecting the religious and national heterogeneity of the Arab-Americans.

The average Arab-American has a higher education and is more likely to be a professional or manager than the average American. They are also less likely to work in the service sector or be laborers. The Arab-American income level reflect their white collar status and their mean family income is $10,000 higher than the national average. However, the community's poverty levels also exceed the national statistics. This disparity indicates Arab-American class distribution is more stratified than the American population's.

	First Wave (1860-1946)	Second Wave (1946-1967)	Third Wave (1967-Present)
Push Factors	• Economic Depression	• Social and Political Instability	• War • Economic Hardship • Social and Political Instability
Pull Factors	• Economic Opportunity	• Economic Opportunity • Education • Social and Political Freedom	• Economic Opportunity • Family Unification /
Demographic Composition	• Lebanese and Syrian • Single Males • Christian • Uneducated	• All Nationalities • Single Males • More Muslims than Christians • Educated	• All Nationalities • Males and Females. • More Muslims than Christians • Uneducated & Educated

Table 3-7. Summary of Arab Immigration Waves. After S Abraham 1989, Karpat 1985, Elkholy 1969, and Naff 1994.

The newer immigrants, those Arabs arriving between 1980 and 1990, have lower incomes and higher poverty rates than the Arab-American and national aggregates. They do, however, have higher percentages for high school and college completion and resemble the Arab-American occupational distribution with two-thirds filling either managerial, professional, technical, or administrative positions.

The comparison of the Arab-Americans to other ethnic groups revealed the community to be competitive in economic and cultural statistics. They ranked no lower than seventh out of thirteen in all of the categories and within one or two places of the national average.

IV. CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE ARAB-AMERICANS

A. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Numbers alone can not provide a complete portrait of the Arab-Americans. From the Americanization debate in the Syrian World to today's battle for mosque domination, the community has struggled to define its cultural identity. The balance between assimilation and preservation depends not only on the immigrant, but on the society left behind, and the society entered. Empowered by the increased global importance of the Middle East, encouraged by the transformation of the United States into a multicultural nation, and repulsed by the moral decay in modern society, descendants of the pioneers and current immigrants have made a concerted effort to resurrect and preserve Arab traditions in the United States. This chapter summarizes the evolution and present status of Arab-American cultural identity and institutions.

B. IDENTITY

Upon arrival in the United States immigrants have three choices for coping with their heritage. The first, ethnic denial, involves the deliberate deemphasis of one's culture. The immigrant's goal is to go unnoticed in the new society. Ethnic isolation, the second option, is a based upon an immigrant's desire to remain within one's own culture. Such a decision may be based upon an assumption that American culture is incompatible and inferior to the immigrant's own or something as simple as age, older immigrants may feel it is too difficult or time consuming to learn a new language and adopt new traditions. In either case, the result is the same: the establishment of cultural safehavens and the detachment of entire communities from the American mainstream. Lastly, there is ethnic

integration. A reconciliatory approach, it stresses the similarities between the two cultures while demanding the recognition of the legitimacy of the foreign culture. (N Abraham 1989)

At the individual level, a person is capable of employing all three strategies depending on the situation. However, at the community level, one approach to assimilation dominates. The community choice is largely determined by their perception of themselves, their perception of the host culture, and the host culture's perception of them. (N Abraham 1989)

As mentioned in Chapter II, the pioneer Arab-Americans adopted the strategy of ethnic denial and the second wave were predominantly integrationists. Cultural integration continues to be the strategy of choice for Arab-Americans today.

Israel's total victory in the 1967 War and the anti-Arab backlash in the media had a sobering effect on the Arab-American community. Before the war, American-born Arabs and the recent immigrants did not interact or recognize that they shared a common heritage. The hostility towards Arabs united them in an effort to counter American misconceptions and ensure the preservation of Arab culture.

The first noticeable effect of the cultural coalition was an increase in mosque attendance and construction. A rise in the interest of learning and teaching Arabic accompanied the Islamic revival. Not be outdone, a number of the Eastern orthodox churches began to offer language and history classes. Those Arab-Americans who chose not to express their ethnicity in religious terms still participated in the Arab renaissance by taking Arabic classes at college or joining social clubs.

Arab-Americans took their culture outside the community for the first time. Concerted efforts to educate the American public about Arab heritage and Islam, to alter the depiction of Arabs in history texts, and to document the Arab-American experience began.

The Arab renaissance has been facilitated by a fundamental shift in American society. Today's multicultural America does not pressure ethnic groups to assimilate. Instead, affirmative action and similar programs reward communities able to maintain their cultural authenticity: "Racial preference entitlements and multicultural ideology encourage them to retain their distinct ethnic and racial identities." (Lind 1995)

The majority of American and foreign born Arabs seem to have reached an agreement on the usefulness of a blanket identity to increase Arab cultural and political legitimacy. The Arab-American hyphenate may not represent all Arab-Americans all of the time, but it does serve two purposes. First, it stresses the similarities and compatibility of American and Arab culture and second, it provides an air of legitimacy to and a voice with which to demand recognition for the Arab minority. (Sulieman 1994)

A small minority, however, maintain distinction by refusing to adopt the Arab-American label. The most prevalent is the Palestinians. Since their diaspora after the 1948 creation of Israel, the Palestinians have maintained a strong national identity. It does not matter whether the Palestinian was born in Jordan, Kuwait, America, or another host country, they maintain their primary identity as Palestinians and declare themselves as such. (S Abraham 1983)

Another recent trend is a by-product of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East. New immigrants have begun to identify themselves as Muslims. Arab culture and country

of origin are overshadowed by their strict adherence to Islamic practices. (S Abraham 1983)

Usually poor and uneducated Muslims, these immigrants are shocked by America's value system, or in their view, America's lack of a value system. They believe they must maintain a separate identity or risk the corruption of their faith. This belief is reinforced by the Muslim clerics that have accompanied the third wave. (Naff 1983) The Muslim isolationists justify their separateness with "...a posture of intensified "Islamic Pride and a belief in the merit of the Islamization of North America." (Abu-Laban 1989)

C. LANGUAGE

"Language is the glue that binds all Arabs together, transcending religious, tribal, and regional differences." (Drysdale and Blake 1988) The second and third waves recognize the importance of the transmission of Arabic to preserving Arab culture. A working knowledge of Arabic is vital to practicing Muslims.[31] Additionally, contact with the homeland is more direct and frequent and having grandchildren able to communicate with grandparents is a real concern.

The community press and organizations have aided in the teaching of Arabic to second and third generation Arab-Americans. Their efforts have met with limited success. A difficult language to learn, only the most rudimentary skills can be taught in afterschool sessions and the instructors must compete with more "normal" activities such as sports and video games.

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[31] The Quran is available only in Arabic. English interpretations are not considered comparable replacements for the Arabic text because the Quran is the word of God and crucial elements of His message may be lost or altered in translation. For the same reason, the Quran may not be altered to reflect different Arabic dialects and is the standard for the language.

The graph in Figure 4-1 compares the number of Arab-Americans to the number of

Arabic speakers in the ten states with the highest Arab-American populations.[33] The

disparity between the numbers speaks for itself; half the community is incapable of

speaking the language that defines it. The inability to teach Arabic to American born

generations is even more apparent with the realization 41 percent of Arab-Americans are

foreign born and Arabic is their first language.
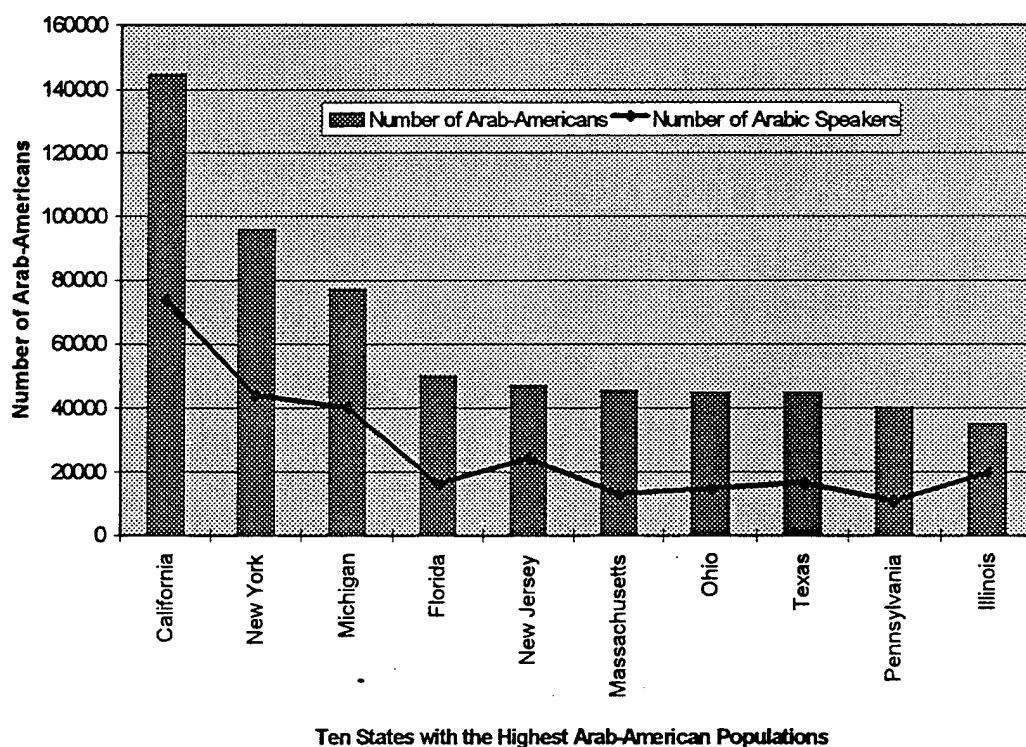
Figure 4-1. Arabic Speaking Abilities of the Arab-American Community.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-2-1.

D. RELIGION

Arab-American heterogeneity is not limited to differences in nationality. The

community is also split religiously between Islam and Christianity. Unlike the Arab

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[33] Appendix E contains the number of Arab-Americans and Arabic speakers in all 50 states.

World, Arab Christians outnumber Arab Muslims in the United States.[34]   The Arab-

Americans are further divided within the religions. The Druze, Sufis, and Sunnis are the

primary sects present in the Muslim community and the Christians are subdivided first into

Protestant and Eastern Orthodox and then by specific denomination.

1. Arab-American Muslims

Muslim emigration from Dar al-Islam, the House of Islam, to Dar al-Harb, the

House of War, is new to the history of the religion. Scholar Bernard Lewis explains in his

essay "Muslim Populations Under Non-Muslim Rule" (1993):

> For such an action by Muslims, there is no precedent in Islamic
> history, no previous discussion in Islamic legal literature...the possibility
> never seems to have entered their minds that a Muslim would voluntarily
> leave a Muslim land in order to place himself in this predicament...A mass
> migration -a reverse hijra- of ordinary people seeking a new life among the
> unbelievers is an entirely new phenomenon....

For a practicing Muslim to leave the security of the Muslim world and risk losing

his faith is serious matter. According to the Quran, to forsake Islam is punishable by

death (Lewis 1993). Potential emigrants were strongly discouraged from migrating out of

fear they would be unable to maintain their faith in Christian societies (Haddad 1983; Naff

1994) Some scholars would have found no comfort in U. S. laws allowing Muslims to

practice unimpeded, the risk of apostasy was still present and actually heightened with the

increased tolerance (Lewis 1993).

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[34] No definitive statistics exist on the Christian-Muslim split of the community. Ratio estimates
range from 4:1 to 1:1. That the predominantly Christian Lebanese, Syrians, and Iraqis comprise 60
percent of the community indicates Christians still outnumber the Muslims.

A minority of recent immigrants have begun a reform movement to return the Americanized mosques[35] to more traditional practices. "A coalition between illiterate traditional rural men and highly educated young students or immigrants committed to a strict Islamic has formed, and...appears to be operative in 'wresting the leadership of the mosque' away from those who labored long to bring it into being." (Haddad 1983) The Islamic conservatives are supported by a new generation of overseas mosque leadership including the Muslim World League (MWL). The MWL has sponsored the formation of an American Council of the Masjid to provide economic assistance and spiritual guidance to mosques in an attempt to curb the "deviant" tendencies of Islam in the United States (Haddad 1983).

The MWL's primary allies in the effort to resurrect traditional Islam is the Muslim Student Association (MSA). Formed at the University of Illinois, Urbana, in 1963, the MSA has maintained direct ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jamaati Islam since its inception. The members have dedicated themselves to promoting pure and true Islam in the United States.

The MWL and MSA efforts to revert mosques to Arab cultural practices have been unsuccessful for two reasons. First is the adoption of Sunni Muslim practices by the majority of the members of the Nation of Islam in 1975. African Americans are the largest ethnic group within American Islam. Their interpretations of Islam and the role of the mosque reflect their American experiences and coincide with the evolution of the religion to resemble the American Protestant standard. (Dart 1995; Haddad 1994)

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[35] The Americanization of the mosques is covered in Chapter II.

The second reason recent Arab immigrants are not succeeding in reasserting

cultural dominance within the mosques is the arrival of non-Arab Muslims in record

numbers to the United States. Primarily Pakistanis, Iranians, and Indians, the new arrivals

reject efforts to define Islam strictly in an Arab framework. In fact, Indo-Pakistanis

outnumber the Arab-American Muslims and comprise the second largest ethnic group

within the religion.[36] (Haddad 1994; NPR 1995)

Whether they choose to adhere to the Americanized or the Arab version, Arab-

Americans who practice Islam in the United States will always encounter difficulties. The

fundamental tenets of Islam, monotheism and submission to Allah's will, are intellectually

compatible with the dominant Judeo-Christian society. Conflict arises, however, in the

day to day adherence to Islam. Work schedules, insufficient facilities, and fear of public

ridicule prevent Muslims from completing their five daily prayers and attending Friday

prayer services. Muslim employees and students also have difficulties observing Islamic

holidays. For example, during the month of Ramadan Muslims are required to fast daily.

In countries with Islamic majorities, office hours and workloads are adjusted to reflect the

people's decreased energy levels. Such accommodation is unheard of in the United States.

Additionally, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha,[37] the two holiest days for Muslims are not

recognized holidays.

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[36] A 1994 survey of active mosques in North America revealed 70 percent of mosques are multi-ethnic. African Americans attend in the largest numbers, followed by Indo-Pakistani immigrants and, finally, Arab-Americans. (Dart 1995)

[37] Eid al-Fitr is celebrated at the end of Ramadan and Eid al-Adha marks the annual end of the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca.

The conflicts between Islam and American society go beyond the calendar. Islam has strict dietary laws that prohibit the ingestion of alcohol, pork, and improperly slaughtered meats. To be fit for consumption, meat must be halal, from an animal butchered and bled "with the name of God recited at the time of slaughtering" (Haddad 1983) Obtaining halal meats is difficult outside of urban areas and the majority of Muslims have no access to properly prepared meat.[38]

Islam also dictates a dress code for women. Although a number of interpretations of the requirements exist, there is a bare minimum: loose fitting clothing with only the hands and face visible and a hijab to cover the hair. Muslim women who adhere to the dress code face public ridicule and discrimination. Not until recently have employers recognized a woman's right to dress in accordance with Islamic guidelines.[39]

Lastly, Islam is an authoritarian religion. It dictates all aspects of a Muslim's life. To be fully realized, a theocratic state is required. The laws that govern Muslims are derived from the Quran or the life of Mohammed. Muslims that choose to live in the United States must do so in accordance with American civil laws. Islamic and American law conflict in number of areas ranging from divorce to family inheritances. Because it is unlikely American courts will make allowances for or recognize the validity of Islamic law, Muslims will have to "accept judgments that contradict the will of God." (Haddad 1983)

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[38] Some Muslims have found compromises to overcome the difficulty of obtaining halal meats. They may butcher their own animals, buy from the more prevalent Kosher butchers, or abstain from meat altogether and become vegetarians.

[39] In late 1995, two women, one California the other in Virginia, were reinstated at their jobs after being fired for wearing their hijabs. The companies involved apologized for their ignorance and promised to hold sensitivity training. (CAIR 1995)

Despite the incompatibility of Islamic and American culture, Arab-Americans

wishing to maintain their faith have the greatest chance for success today. Islam has

become the fastest growing religion in the United States. Eighty percent of the existing

mosques have been built in the last 25 years (Dart 1995) and the number of American

Muslims is estimated to have been increasing by 100,000 a year since the early eighties

due to conversions, immigration, and procreation. (Haddad 1983)

Of the 1046 total mosques or masjids in the United States, only 948 hold Friday

prayer sessions. The average attendance at the Friday prayers is 173 Muslims. Table 4-1

documents mosque attendance the top metropolitan areas in North America and Figure 4-

2 details the number of mosques in those regions. Note that Detroit, the city with the

largest Arab-American population, ranks eighth for mosque attendance.

The number of Muslims participating, 486,390, falls dramatically short of the

estimated five to seven million Muslims living in the United States. Dr. Ihsan Bagby, who

directed the most comprehensive survey of mosque demographics to date, estimates for

every Muslim attending the prayer meeting, there are ten who do not.[40] (Directory 1994)

In addition to the mosques, Islamic schools have been founded to provide Muslim

children with religious education, temptation free environments, and social reinforcement.

Appendix F lists the distribution of mosques and Islamic schools by state. A small mail

order industry producing Islamic materials for children and adults has developed to serve

those Muslims not living near or not desiring to attend the mosques or

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[40] As stated earlier, to be a faithful Muslim does not require participation in a mosque.

City	Number of Mosques	Number Holding Friday Prayer	Average Attendance	Total Attendance
New York	98	94	292	27,448
Southern California	55	49	242	11,858
Chicago	60	58	180	10,440
Washington DC	31	28	300	8,400
Toronto	16	16	449	7,184
San Francisco	37	34	203	6,902
North New Jersey	39	35	181	6,335
Detroit	32	30	183	5,490
Houston	22	21	228	4,788
Philadelphia	25	22	137	3,014

Table 4-1. North American Mosque Attendance. After <u>Directory</u> 1994.
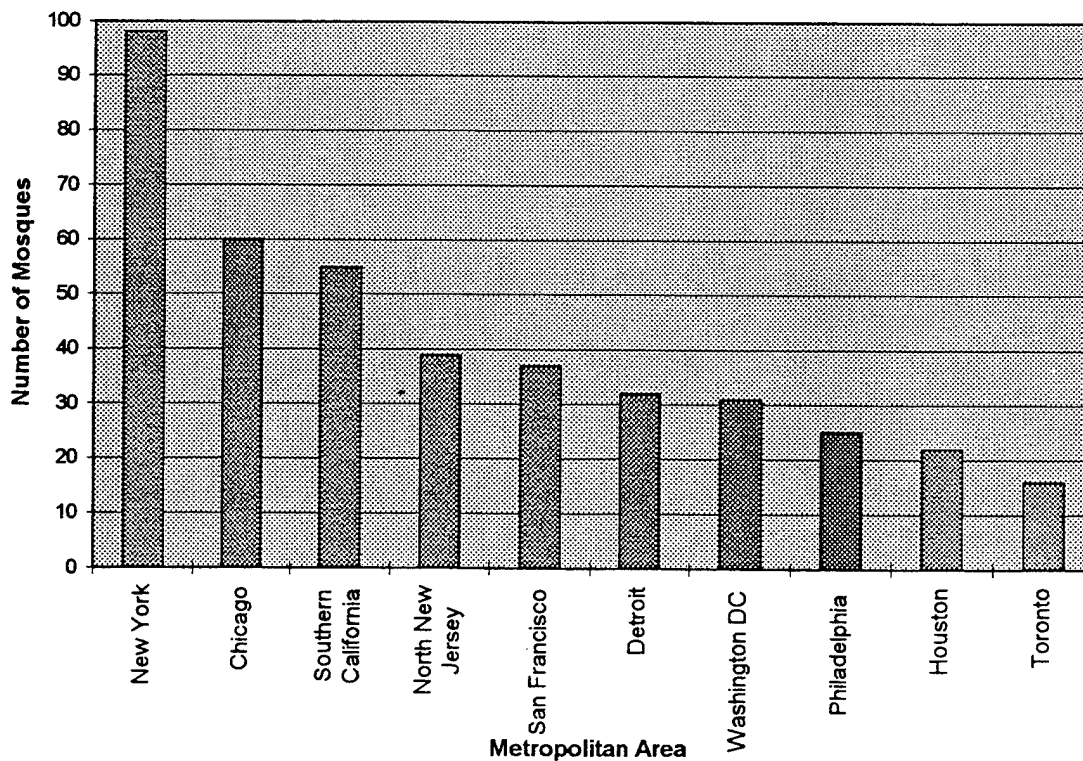
Figure 4-2. Top Ten Metropolitan Areas for Mosque Distribution. After <u>Directory</u> 1994.

schools. The companies, mosques, and schools are further reinforced by a growing network of Islamic organizations. The organizations range in purpose from charity and missionary work to professional networking. Figure 4-3 provides a break down of Muslim organizations by purpose.

Most significant is the recent growth of umbrella organizations to unify the Islamic community and provide a voice for Islamic concerns in American political and cultural debates. The largest, the Islamic Society of North America, is affiliated with 40 percent of established mosques. Another 20 percent follow the leadership of Imam W. Deen Mohammed, who led the African-American community away from the Nation of Islam to Sunni Islam. The remainder of the mosques are not affiliated. (Dart 1995)

2. Arab-American Christians

The majority of Arab-American Christians belong to Eastern Apostolic churches. Affiliation with the churches has been and continues to be a focal point for social interaction. As Chapter II explains, the congregations have not been unaffected by their transplantation into Protestant America. Their history of survival under extreme persecution in their homelands and ability to adapt to the needs of the parishioners indicate the churches will continue to thrive in the United States. Table 4-2 summarizes participation in the Eastern churches.
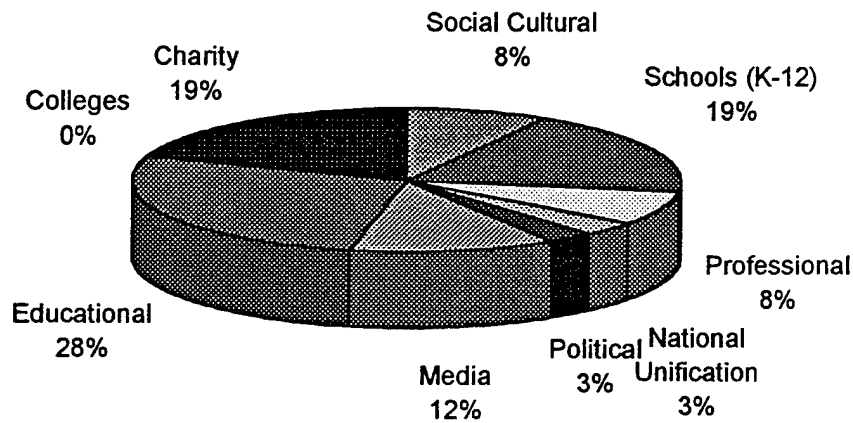
Figure 4-3. Muslim Organizations by Purpose. After
Directory 1994.

Church	Christology	Rite	Parishes	Members
Antiochian Orthodox	Chalcedonian[1]	Byzantine	150	280,000
Coptic Orthodox	Monophysite[2]	Alexandrian	50	185,000
Syrian Orthodox	Monophysite	Antiochian	28	30,000
Maronite	Monothelite[3]	Antiochian	43	51,700
Chaldean	Monophysite	Chaldean	10	45,000
Melkite	Chalcedonian	Byzantine	36	25,150

Table 4-2. Eastern Churches in the United States. After Haddad 1994. [1]Believes Christ's divinity equals his humanity. [2] Believes Christ's divinity supersedes his humanity. [3]Believes Christ has one will but two natures: the human and the divine.

In addition to the Eastern churches, there are approximately 100 Arabic speaking

evangelical churches. One third of the congregations are Presbyterian sponsored and the

remainder are members of the Southern Baptist Convention. According to one minister,

the churches play an invaluable role as "feeder Churches." After gaining the necessary English skills or intermarrying, the immigrants "move into American churches." (Haddad 1994)

A number of Arab-Americans attend non-evangelical Protestant churches. The typical Arab Episcopalian or Presbyterian learned English prior to immigrating and attended the same type of services in their homeland. The first arrivals at the turn of the century were products of the American missionary efforts. The Christianity the immigrants learned from the missionaries was more conservative and fundamentalist than the religion practiced in the states. In addition to the ideological differences, the U.S. churches were extremely class and race conscious and as a result rejected the new arrivals. Separate congregations were established to accommodate the Arabs. (Haddad 1994)

If the underlying racism that necessitated the formation of separate congregations were to disappear, it is doubtful the Arab-Americans would join the parishes. The Arab language churches have maintained a more conservative theology than their counterparts. The separate churches serve to isolate the community "...from the breakdown of the Christian moral and ethical structure evident in the mainline denominations." (Haddad 1994) The differences are perceived to have become so great the Arab clergy has condemned their American equivalents: "These American Presbyterians are not Christian. They are promiscuous, they believe in divorce, practice serial polygamy, welcome unwed mothers, and consider ordaining homosexual clergy in the church. This is unacceptable." (Haddad 1994)

E. SECULAR ORGANIZATIONS AND THE ARAB-AMERICAN MEDIA

No event had a larger impact on the Arab-American community than the Arab

defeat in 1967. The war and the anti-Arab sentiment it generated in the United States

generated a defensive reflex from the Arab-Americans. Persons who had previously

shrugged off their Arab ancestry were compelled to reassert cultural and political bonds

within the United States and with their respective homelands. The organizations founded

in the wake of the 1967 war intended to unite the community, preserve the Arab traditions

within the community, and influence American attitudes toward Arab-Americans and their

homelands. (Elkholy 1969; Naff 1994; Sulieman 1994)

Today, Arab-American organizations remain vital to survival of the community.

Thousands of organizations exist at the local, regional, and national level. Contributions

of each wave of immigrants can be seen in the diversity of the organizations. Social and

charitable goals are hold-overs from before the wars, political mobilization and community

unification are post-1967 contributions. The diversity of the organizations is illustrated in

Figure 4-4.

In the 70's and 80's as the technology became available and the Arab-American

audience grew, the press expanded into radio and television. Technology also permitted

the media to expand its coverage of the Middle East and distribution of the material in the

United States. Current Arab-American print media circulation is estimated at 700,000 a

month, with 47 national publications and hundreds of newsletters. Figures 4-5 and 4-6

break down the national publications by purpose and language. Television and radio

programs estimate their combined audience at six million a month for over 250 hours of

broadcasting. (Arab-American Almanac 1994)
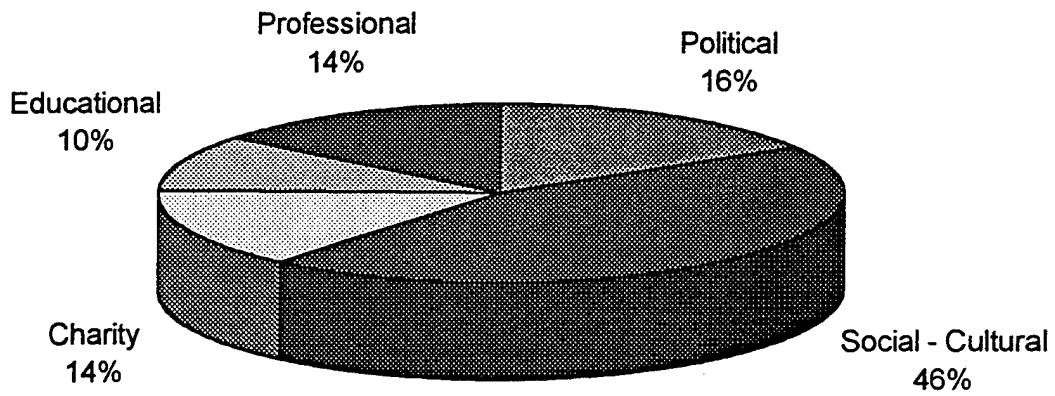
Figure 4-4. Arab-American Organizations by Purpose. After Arab-American Almanac 1994.
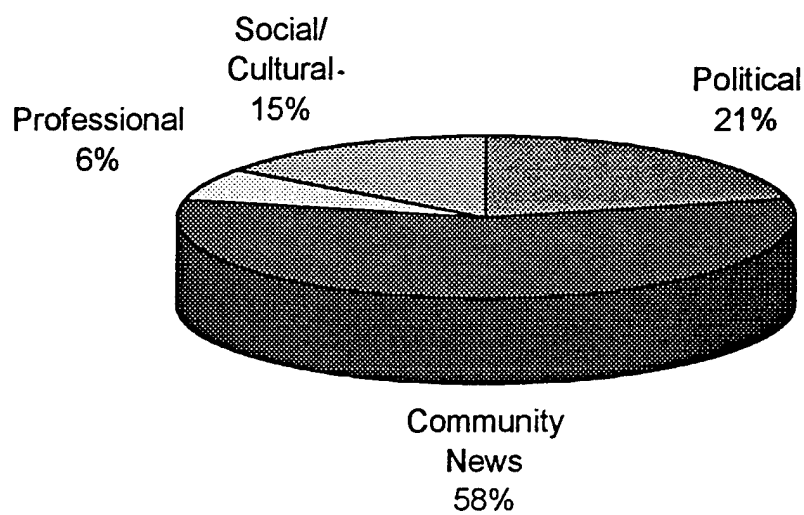
Figure 4-5. Arab-American Press by Purpose. After Arab-American Almanac 1994.

English
32%

Arabic &
English
42%

Arabic
26%
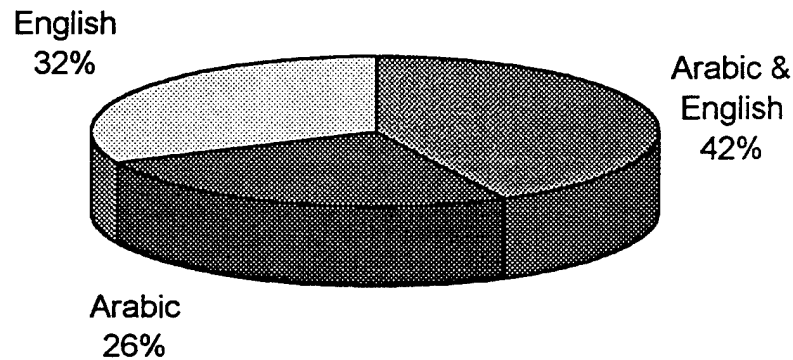
Figure 4-6. Linguistic Distribution of the Arab-American Press. After Arab-American Almanac 1994.

F. POLITICAL IDENTITY

The democratic stability of the United States rests on the "recognition that ethnic identity and ethnically based political activity are fundamental features of the American landscape." (Cochran 1996) The American political system is predisposed to allow special interest groups access to the political process. That access is possible does not necessarily mean it is granted. Access is a function of "the group's strategical position in society." (Bard 1991) Strategic position is determined primarily by the group's authority in comparison with other groups and the compatibility of the group's agenda to the majority interest. Until recently, the Arab-Americans have not scored high in either category.

Prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the oil embargo, the political atmosphere could best be described as "pro-Israeli" instead of "anti-Arab." The Energy Crisis,

followed by the Iranian Hostage Crisis, ushered in an era of politicians' supplementing their support for Israel with Arab bashing. (Sulieman 1988) Preying on anti-Arab sentiment, political candidates have used the Arab archetype as a scapegoat to bolster public support prior to elections and deflect criticism for policy choices. Politicians also rejected support from Arab-Americans and distanced themselves from "Arab" issues.

The Arab-Americans realized their image was a political handicap during their first attempt to mobilize politically.[41] The educated newer immigrants and the third generation of first wave immigrants formed the nucleus of Arab-American political activism, the Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG). Within weeks of inception, the AAUG realized the American political system was so over-saturated with anti-Arab hostility and pro-Israeli sentiment that obtaining significant political gains through traditional methods was impossible. In response, the AAUG adopted a two pronged approach of preaching cultural isolationism while focusing on a massive information effort about the Arab population both within the United States and abroad. (Shain 1995)

The work of the AAUG was not enough to gain Arab-Americans political access. The rise of the petrodollar, however, did enable Arab lobbies to increase their political clout.[42] Unfortunately, the Arab gains did more damage than good for the politically

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[41] Prior to 1967, the Arab-American community did not express political ambitions in the traditional sense. "Up to World War I, the main political activity of the Arab group was intersectarian and intracommunal...sect was a substitute for and an embodiment of the community, country, and nation." (Sulieman 1994) Post-WW II participation in U.S. politics was limited to "...voting, party membership, and some public or political service...." (Sulieman 1994)

[42] It is important to differentiate between the Arab and the Arab-American lobbies. The Arab lobby is defined as those formal and informal elements attempting to establish American support for Arab interests in the Middle East. The Arab-American lobby is primarily concerned with U.S. national interests in the Middle East as well as the ethnic community's domestic financial, political, and cultural needs. The goals of the two lobbies have coincided and conflicted in the past.

active Arab-Americans. Americans felt betrayed by the politicians favoring Arab causes at their expense. They believed the money the Arabs used to gain influence in Washington came directly out of their pockets at the gas pumps. In addition, they also felt threatened by the economic strength of the OPEC nations and the increased investment of Middle East countries in the United States.

The stereotype of the money dripping sheik reached its height with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Operation ABSCAM. [42] The acceptance of the Arab sheik stereotype by politicians indicated a renewed effort to educate government officials about the true Arab-American identity was needed. Prominent Arab-American and former Senator James Abourezk founded the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) in the wake of the ABSCAM scandal. The ADC has since been "actively engaged in documenting and challenging racism, bias, and stereotyping." (ADC 1995)

Negative stereotyping is not the only reason for the Arab-American's political ineffectiveness. The high level of Jewish-American activism, made even more potent by the concentration of the Jewish population in critical election states, and the large financial contributions to election campaigns from the Jewish-American community make the Jewish-American lobby an attractive ally.[43] Political affinity for pro-Israeli policy is bolstered by a perceived congruity between American and Israeli cultural values. After all, Israel is the only democratic state in the Middle East, a region historically dominated by despots and autocrats. (Bard 1991)

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[42] The 1978 sting operation involved fake Arab sheiks bribing government officials for immigration visas and building and gambling licenses.

[43] The Jewish-American lobby is surpassed only by the Anglo-American lobby as the most effective ethnic lobby in the United States. (DeConde 1992)

Despite an early tendency for the Arab-Americans to blame their failures solely on their Jewish counterparts, they have identified and begun to overcome their own shortcomings. First there is the size and composition of the community. The Arab-American community is approximately half the size of the American Jewish population and is not nearly as politically organized. Unlike their Jewish-American counterparts, Arab-Americans are not aligned with one political party. Some favor the Republican Party for its conservative values, while others prefer the Democrats for their willingness to recognize ethnic differences and address humanitarian issues. (Sulieman 1994; Samhan 1988) They also lack substantial allies to compensate for the numerical differences. Fragile coalitions with other lobbies exist, but they are strictly issue driven. (Jabara 1989; Samhan 1989)

Closely related to the size of the constituency is its composition. The Arab-American community is multi-national. A majority originate from Lebanon with smaller portions of the population tracing their ancestry to Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, Jordan or any other of the states in the Arab world. As the originating states have conflicting priorities and interests, so do the Arab-Americans. Only on humanitarian issues, such as the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Palestinian self-determination, and the United Nations' embargo of Iraq, has the community reached a consensus. (Bard 1991)

The Arab-American organizations must shoulder some of the responsibility for their ineffectiveness. Inter and intra organization competition, poor leadership, a failure to connect with the constituents it represents, a tendency to generate criticism instead of useful alternatives, and personality conflicts continue to plague their attempts to gain a political voice. (Jabara 1989; Orfalea 1989)

The Arab-Americans have gained considerable political ground since the late eighties. The turnaround can be attributed to several factors. The first is the 1985 founding of the Arab American Institute (AAI) and its efforts to build the community into a political force. Increased Arab-American voter registration and participation in the political parties are the AAI's major contributions. The recognition of AAI's tenth anniversary by President Clinton and other national leaders[44] affirmed the growing national importance of the AAI and Arab-Americans in politics. (Ferguson 1995; Zogby 1995)

Progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process also contributes to the political empowerment of the Arab-Americans. Author Yosii Shain (1995) explains the connection between the progress and Arab-Americans' perception of increased potentials for success and their corresponding willingness to participate politically :

> Arab American activists have long argued that their exclusion radiates primarily from the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is a result, they claim of associating them with Americans' twisted images of their Arab and Palestinian compatriots in the Middle East. These activists also held the pro-Israeli lobby responsible for the lack of access to the American political system. Thus, Arab American integrationists have drawn a direct link between their domestic empowerment and the ebbing of the Middle East conflict.

The connection between peace in the Middle East and the decrease in the "Arab stigma" is reinforced by events following the 1993 Israeli-PLO peace accords. AAI president James Zogby joined with Jewish-American leaders in "Builders for Peace," a President Clinton sponsored coalition for developing the West Bank and Gaza economy.

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[44]Vice -president Gore, Democratic National Chairman Don Fowler, Senate Minority Leader Tome Daschle, Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala all addressed the conference. Over 20 members of Congress attended the event.

Also, the ADC refusal to endorse the accords led to sharp criticism and marginalization of the organization within the community. (Shain 1995)

Finally, the Arab-Americans have also transformed their message from anti-Israel to pro-U.S.. By placing Arab-American concerns in a national interest context, the Arab-American organizations have had greater success at bringing their "issues into the mainstream of American electoral politics." (Zogby 1995) The Palestinian quest for self-determination has evolved from a narrow minded battle against Israel to a more complex fight for human rights and democracy. The dominant Arab-American organizations have also gained recognition for their criticism of non-democratic Arab regimes.[45] (Shain 1995)

G. CONCLUSION

The Arab-American community is struggling to preserve certain aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity. This process is all the more difficult due to the diversity of the community. Divided into religious and national cleavages,[46] the community has not reached a consensus on what aspects of their heritage to preserve, let alone what it means to be Arab.

Despite the community's heterogeneity, a number of factors favor cultural transmission. Interaction between the waves, unheard of prior to the Six-Day War, is now common place due to the founding of secular organizations. The availability of social, political, and religious reinforcement and leadership has also never been higher.

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[45] Interestingly, James Zogby has altered his position on democracy in the Middle East. He now supports any pro-American regime "regardless of their internal practices." (Shain 1995) Zogby has expressed his concern with campaigns to destabilize Egypt and Saudi Arabia with pro-democracy rhetoric. See *The Mideast Mirror*, Vol 109, No 70 (April 1995).

[46] The economic data in Chapter III indicates the community is further segregated by class.

American hostility toward and negative stereotyping of the Arab-Americans have also contributed to the coalescence of the community. Arab-Americans do not agree on many issues, but they all concur the popular image of "Arabs are Muslims are terrorists" needs to be abolished. Following the Oklahoma City bombing and the anti-Arab violence it spawned,[48] the community banded together and reaffirmed their commitment to educating the general public about Islamic and Arab culture.

The Arab-Americans have made significant strides in community coalescence. However, they have not reached the level of unity required to achieve significant political impact as a minority group or to preserve a distinct and common Arab culture across generations. The same religious diversity and conflicting nationalities that doomed the Pan-Arab movement in the Middle East combine with secular American culture to overwhelm attempts to form a cohesive Arab-American identity.

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[48] In the three days following the bombing, 222 anti-Arab and anti-Islamic incidents were recorded by law enforcement agencies. The violent backlash against the community is not new. Since the mid-eighties and the Reagan Administration's retaliatory strikes on Libya, the Arab-American community has been targeted by jingoistic racists excited by confrontation between the United States and a Middle Eastern country. Jingoistic violence has also occurred during the Gulf War and after the World Trade Center bombing.

V. CONCLUSION

A. SUMMARY

Arabs have a long tradition of immigration to the United States. The pioneer immigrants first arrived in the latter half of the Eighteenth Century. Predominantly Christian male laborers and farmers from Lebanon, they did consider their stay in the United States to be permanent. They had traveled to America to make their fortunes an return home. World War I and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire altered their perspectives. The majority decided to stay and the permanent settlement of Arabs in the United States began. They bettered their economic standings within their own lifetimes and ensured their children would have the education and modern conveniences they went without. By the end of World War II, the pioneer Arabs and their descendants "…integration in U.S. society was nearly total." (Sulieman 94)

Arab ethnicity in the United States was saved from extinction by the next wave of Arab immigrants. This second wave of immigrants were ideal additions to the American landscape. They represented the "…capitalist classes, landed gentry, and influential urban families…." (El-Badry 1994) They spoke fluent English, were Western educated, and pursued white collar vocations. Scientists, lawyers, doctors, and professors, they contributed to the economic and technological boom following World War II.

The present, or third wave, of Arab immigrants differs from its predecessors in three ways. First, is the large numbers of immigrants. Seventy-five percent of foreign born Arab-Americans have arrived since 1964 and Arab immigration from 1990 to 1994

79

averaged over 24,000 persons annually. To place this figure in perspective, immigration from 1948 to 1967 totaled just over 53,000. In other words, the present annual immigration rate is almost ten times higher.

The third wave is also distinct because of the religious beliefs of the immigrants: 80 percent are estimated to be Muslims. Influenced by the Islamic renewal and bolstered by the growing Muslim population in North America, they are more likely to maintain and practice Muslim traditions. (Abu-Laban 1989)

Lastly, the third wave is, aside from religion, more diverse than previous waves. Immigrants are still predominantly male but more women are migrating. Third wave educational levels are higher than the community average, however, the graduates are not all products of Western universities. And even though one in four Arab immigrants is from Lebanon,[49] the new arrivals represent the Arab nations in more evenly distributed numbers. Egyptians and Palestinians/Jordanians each account for 20 percent of the immigrants and 15 percent are from Iraq. The remaining immigrants are from the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, and Syria.

The contemporary Arab-American community is composed of third and fourth generation descendants of the pioneer immigrants and the recent arrivals. Christians of Lebanese ancestry comprise the largest percentage of the diverse community. Their income levels and education levels are higher than the national average and they are more likely to be members of the professional class. When compared to other ethnic groups in the United States, they rank below the Euro-American enclaves but are competitive within

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[49] Lebanese continue to be the largest Arab nationality admitted because current immigration policy is favors family unification over professional or other preferences.

the Asian subgroup. Their economic and social status is well above the Hispanic, American Indian, and African American populations'.

Just as the flood of immigrants arriving since the mid-sixties has altered American demographics, the recent Arab immigrants have changed the Arab-American community. Cultural heterogeneity within the community has increased with the arrival of Arabs from all of the Arab countries and a steady influx of Muslims. Economically, the newest Arab-Americans decrease the community's standard of living with lower incomes and higher poverty rates. Culturally, the new immigrants have limited English skills and are more likely to resist assimilation.

No matter their arrival year, Arab immigrants settle in metropolitan areas. Detroit and its surrounding communities has the highest population of Arab-Americans in the country. First wave laborers were attracted by the employment opportunities in the automobile industry in the early 1900's. Neighborhoods in Detroit reflect the cultural diversity of the Arab-Americans. The community is segregated by religious, economic, and national divisions. Enclaves exist even at the level of religious sect and village of origin.

The majority of Arab-Americans also live in one of ten states. California has the highest population at over 140,000. New York is a distant second at over 90,000 and Michigan is third at over 75,000.

The synopsis of the Arab-American cultural experience revealed Arab stereotypes do not apply to Arab-Americans. Arab-American is not synonymous with Muslim. The majority of Arab-Americans are Christians, and of the American Muslim population, Arab-Americans rank third behind African Americans and Indo-Pakistanis for membership.

81

Practicing Islam in the United States has its difficulties, but the religion, and, more importantly, its adherents are capable of overcoming the cultural road blocks set by Judeo-Christian America.

Arab-American diversity makes community cohesion difficult. Since the 1967 War and the adoption of the Arab-American hyphenate by the majority, the community has struggled to actually realize unity. Borrowing from political geography theory and substituting community for state, group unity "depends on the relative strength of centrifugal forces, which divide a state and promote disunity, and centripetal forces, which unite and bind it together." (Drysdale and Blake 1985) The centrifugal and centripetal forces acting on the Arab-American community are listed below:

Centrifugal Forces:

- Arab-American Heterogeneity. As already demonstrated, the Arab-Americans are anything but culturally cohesive. The major divisions are based upon religion and nationality. Within each exist subdivisions based upon religious sect and hometown of origin. Community statistics also indicate economic stratification within the community. The secular and religious organizations, neighborhoods, and media all reflect the varied Arab-American subcultures.

- Lack of Common Identity. The community has yet to agree on a definition of the Arab culture they are supposedly unified in preserving. As Yvonne Haddad (1994) explains:

> Earlier generations and their descendants have understood it (Arab) as a means of national and ethnic identification, functioning in the same way that relationships with countries of origin have functioned for other immigrants. The term Arab connoted something more to recent arrivals, suggesting the common heritage of a powerful community with

a common language and experience, and of a great civilization that had once ruled much of the world.

Centripetal Forces:

- Religion. Despite the Christian-Islamic split in the community, both religions reinforce traditional Arab values and provide refuges from "...what they perceive as a pornographic, hedonistic, drug-addicted society." (Haddad 1994)

- Political Inaccessibility. Shut out of politics by their negative image and the Jewish lobby, Arab-Americans have discovered unity is an absolute must to promote the interests of their ethnic group.

- Multicultural America. In today's multicultural America, ethnic groups are rewarded for maintaining their distinct identities through preference programs. (Lind 1995) Currently, the Arab-Americans are not recognized as an official minority and are categorized as members of the White race. (CP-2-1 1990) The community is attempting to gain official minority status in order to benefit from the preference programs.

- Arab Stereotyping and Anti-Arab Racism. Since the Crusades the Arabs have been the subject of negative stereotyping in the West. Modern culture is full of movies, television shows, novels, and cartoons that malign Arabs. The negative images and the racism they breed have forced the community to unite in an effort to counter the discrimination and bias.

- Technology. Modern transportation and telecommunications allow the Arab-Americans to literally live a "two-world" existence. Technological advances provide a more substantial link with the homeland, resulting in "reinforcement of community norms and religious practices." (Abu-Laban, 1989) Videos, compact discs, and satellite television also facilitate the maintenance of culture.

The centripetal forces may outnumber the centrifugal forces, but their strength varies with current events and the attention spans of the community members. The centrifugal forces, on the other hand, are constant and stronger; they combine and their synergism overwhelms the opposing forces. Until the Arab-Americans reach a consensus on their identity and ethnic raison d'être, they will be unable to preserve a distinct and common Arab culture across generations.

B. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Although this thesis has contributed significantly to the study of Arab-Americans, it does lead to additional questions suitable for future study:

- Muslims in America. Dr. Bagby's quantitative study of Islamic institutions in the United States was a significant contribution to the study of Islam in the United States. However, a qualitative survey of the American Muslim experience is needed. Since the Oklahoma City bombing the major dailies and their weekend magazines have run articles on the religion. Although the work has helped improve the image of Islam, it has little scholarly value. The effects of Americanization and multinational congregations on the interpretation of Islam needs to be examined.

- Evolution of the Arab-American Political Identity and Effectiveness. The present literature is either outdated or too generalized. The Gulf War, the Arab-Israeli Peace Accords, the Oklahoma City bombing all need to be taken into account.

APPENDIX A. ARAB IMMIGRATION STATISTICS FROM 1869 TO 1994

Year	Males	Females	TOTAL
1869	2	0	2
1870	0	0	0
1871	2	2	4
1872	0	0	0
1873	3	0	3
1874	2	4	6
1875	1	0	1
1876	5	3	8
1877	3	0	3
1878			
1879	19	12	31
1880	1	3	4
1881	5	0	5
1882	0	0	0
1883	0	0	0
1884	0	0	0
1885	0	0	0
1886	14	1	15
1887	184	24	208
1888	230	43	273
1889	499	94	593
1890	841	285	1126
1891	1774	714	2488
1892	.		
1893			
1894			
1895			2767
1896	2915	1224	4139
1897	3203	1529	4732
1898	2651	1624	4275
TOTAL	12354	5562	20683

Table A-1. Number of Turkish Immigrants from 1869 to 1898. After Orfalea.

Year	Males	Females	TOTAL
1899	2446	1262	3708
1900	1813	1107	2920
1901	2729	1335	4064
1902	3337	1645	4982
1903	3749	1802	5551
1904	2480	1173	3653
1905	3248	1574	4822
1906	4100	1724	5824
1907	4276	1604	5880
1908	3926	1594	5520
1909	2383	1285	3668
1910	4148	2169	6317
1911	3609	1835	5444
1912	3646	1879	5525
1913	6177	3033	9210
1914	6391	2632	9023
1915	1174	593	1767
1916	474	202	676
1917	690	286	976
1918	143	67	210
1919	157	74	231
1920	1915	1132	3047
1921	2783	2322	5105
1922	685	649	1334
1923	605	601	1207
1924	801	794	1595
1925	205	245	450
1926	184	304	488
1927	302	382	684
1928	226	387	613
1929	245	387	632
1930	249	388	637
1931	103	241	344
1932	114	170	284
Total	69513	36877	106390

Table A-2. Number of Syrian Immigrants from 1899 to 1932. After Orfalea.

Year	Arabian Peninsula	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	North Africa	Palestine	Syria
1948	1	184	107			103	376	345
1949	2	165	100	4	19	118	234	331
1950	14	165	116	14	204	95	212	130
1951	22	169	109	74	220	111	210	131
1952	89	156	102	132	175	77	156	107
1953	136	168	125	186	261	222	118	124
1954	110	264	162	181	324	483	165	180
1955	90	214	159	271	276	547	140	155
1956	101	272	163	430	390	670	384	185
1957	110	332	180	519	411	768	475	198
1958	101	498	215	377	366	755	151	209
1959	103	1177	238	360	438	772	247	234
1960	120	854	304	371	511	769	205	207
1961	139	452	256	485	498	681	173	191
1962	133	384	314	515	406	669	256	245
1963	134	760	426	556	448	739	196	226
1964	168	828	381	529	410	781	197	244
1965	174	1429	279	532	430	637	170	255
1966	242	1181	657	1005	535	638	320	333
1967	195	1703	1071	1183	752	701	421	555

Table A-3. Number of Arab Immigrants from 1948-1967. Arabian Peninsula includes those immigrants from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen in all of its forms. North Africa includes statistics for persons arriving from Algeria, Djibouti, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. After 1967, Palestinians immigrants are included in the total for Jordan. After Orfalea.

Year	Arabian Peninsula	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	North Africa	Syria
1968	214	2124	540	2010	892	788	644
1969	453	3411	1208	2617	1313	836	904
1970	641	4937	1202	2842	1903	777	1026
1971	706	3643	1231	2588	1867	635	951
1972	1147	2512	1491	2756	1984	689	1012
1973	402	2274	1039	2450	1977	696	1128
1974	848	1831	2281	2838	2400	672	1082
1975	549	1707	2796	2578	2075	604	1222
1976	984	2290	4038	3328	4532	847	1666
1977	682	2328	2811	2875	5685	684	1676
1978	712	2836	2188	3483	4556	854	1416
1979	854	3241	2871	3360	4634	906	1528
1980	918	2833	2658	3322	4136	980	1658
1981	1145	3366	2535	2825	3955	1032	2127
1982	982	2800	3105	2923	3529	1015	2354
1983	1111	2600	2343	2718	2941	1126	1683
1984	1105	2642	2930	2438	3213	1207	1723
1985	1335	2802	1951	2998	3385	1385	1518
TOTAL	16972	61532	44682	58673	62051	26069	29903

Table A-3. Number of Arab Immigrants from 1948 to 1985, Continued. After 1967 Palestinian Immigrants Were Grouped with the Jordanians.

Year	Arabian Peninsula	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	Morocco	Syria
1986	1191	2989	1323	3081	3994	646	1604
1987	1378	3377	1072	3125	4367	635	1669
1988	1556	3016	1022	3232	4910	715	2183
1989	1922	3717	1516	3921	5716	984	2675
1990	2930	4117	1756	4449	5634	1200	2972
1991	2960	5602	1494	4259	6009	1601	2837
1992	3025	3576	4111	4036	5836	1316	2940
1993	2922	3556	4072	4741	5465	1176	2933
1994	2474	3392	6025	3990	4319	1074	2426
TOTAL	20358	33342	22391	34834	46250	9347	22239

Table A-4. Arab Immigration from 1986 to 1994. After Immigration and Naturalization Services. Arabian Peninsula includes persons from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

APPENDIX B. SUMMARY OF EASTERN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

1. Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

The Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, more commonly referred to as the Antiochian Orthodox Church, was founded by apostles Peter and Paul. The first Arab faithful to arrive in America were welcomed into the Russian Orthodox Churches. As their numbers increased, a distinct Syro-Arabian Mission was established in 1892. The first priest, Archimandrite Raphael Hawaweeny, arrived from Syria in 1896 and established the first Syrian Greek Orthodox parish in New York City. Hawaweeny also supervised the building of the first church, Saint Nicholas, consecrated in 1902. In return for his dedication to parishioners, Hawaweeny was designated the first Syrian Greek Hierarch in America.

Hawaweeny's death coincided with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The loss of the church's founding father and the chaos in the Church hierarchy created by the revolution shattered the church into competing factions. The church remained in disarray until 1975 when Metropolitan Phillip Saliba of the Archdiocese of New York and Archbishop Michael Shaheen of the Archdiocese of Toledo signed the Articles of Unification. Today the archdiocese includes 3000 clergymen that govern 170 churches nationwide. Church membership is estimated at 250,000 communicants. (Arab-American Almanac 1994)

2. The Maronite Catholic Diocese

The Maronite Church originated in Syria during the fourth and fifth centuries. Following the Apolisitc See of Antioch, the Maronites use the language of Christ, Aramaic

in their liturgy. The sect has faced enormous persecution including the massacre of 350 monks for their adherence to the Council of Chalcedons' edict on the Trinity. Continued persecution forced the Maronites to leave Syria. The majority resettled in the mountains of Lebanon. Maronites began to arrive in the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Church perpetuation and participation remained dependent on a steady influx of immigrant priests. Not until the foundation of the Our Lady of Lebanon Seminary in Washington DC could America educate and ordain its own priests. The first Maronite Exarch, Bishop Francis Zayek, was later appointed in 1966 to supervise the 47 parishes and over 50,000 members. (Arab-American Almanac1994)

3. The Melkite Catholic Diocese

The Melkite sect of the Eastern churches originated with the Council of Chalcedons decree on the nature of Christ in 451. Those who followed the Byzantine Emperors in embracing the decree were labeled the King's Men or in Syriac, Melkites. After a time, the term narrowed in use and referred to only those members of the Byzantine branch of the Church of Antioch.

During the 18th century the Melkites split into two patriarchates: Orthodox and Catholic. The Orthodox dropped the label Melkites in favor of Antiochian Orthodox. The Catholics kept the name Melkite after their union with Rome. Melkites presence in America dates back to the 1840's. Although exact numbers are unknown, they were a significant enough population to warrant a fund raising visit from Father Flavianos Kfoury in 1849. In 1889 the first permanent clergy arrived to establish parishes in New York and Chicago.

Despite their alignment with Rome, the Melkites were not a welcome addition to Catholic America. American bishops and clergy viewed the sect as corrupting influence. For this reason, the Melkites were unable to organize a diocese until 1966 when an Exarchate was formed under Bishop Justin Najmy. In 1976 the Exarchate was elevated to status of Eparchy and Archbishop Joseph Tawil was chosen to lead the Diocese. At present the Melkites have 84 active clergy from Archbishop down to deacons. The church's 25,000 members are scattered in 42 parishes in 18 states. (Arab-American Almanac1994; Haddad 1994)

4. The Chaldean Church

Chaldean Christians trace their ancestry to the Babylonians and the Assyrians. Most come from what is today modern Iraq but Chaldeans from neighboring Iran or Syria are not unusual. The apostle, St. Thomas, and two of his assistants brought Christianity to the region. Like the Maronites, Chaldeans perform their services in Aramaic.

The first arrival of significant numbers of Chaldeans in the United States followed World War I. However, the Chaldeans would have to wait through another war before the first priest was sent to America in 1947. The American Chaldeans remained under the tutelage of the Roman Catholic hierarchy until 1982 when Pope John Paul II created an official diocese of Chaldeans in the United States. The Chaldean parishes are few in number but have large memberships. The over 45,000 Chaldeans attend one of ten parishes located in either Detroit, California, or Chicago. (Arab-American Almanac1994; Haddad 94)

5. The Coptic Orthodox Church

Established in 56 AD in Alexandria, Egypt by St. Mark, the Coptic Orthodox
Church has maintained their liturgy intact despite the passage of nearly 2000 years and
endless persecution as a Christian minority. Their immigration to America came relatively
late in the mid sixties. The first two churches founded in 1967 have since been
accompanied by 50 others and their membership has skyrocketed to 185,000, making it
the second largest Eastern Church in the United States. (Arab-American Almanac1994)

6. The Syrian Orthodox Church

The first Patriarch of Antioch and founder of the Syrian Orthodox Church was St.
Peter the Apostle. Founded between 37 and 43 AD, the Church claims to be "the most
ancient church in Christendom." (Arab-American Almanac1994)

Members of the church began to migrate to America in the late 1800's. The
majority settled in and around Detroit, Michigan and Rhode Island. The first priest
assigned to administer to the parishioners in the United States arrived in 1907. It would
take twenty more years, however, to consecrate the first Syrian Orthodox church on the
New York- New Jersey border. -

The bulk of Syrian Orthodox immigrants arrived during the first half of World War
I. Fleeing persecution from the Ottoman Empire, they joined the established settlements in
Rhode Island and built the second Syrian Orthodox church in America. The small
congregations grew at a slow but steady rate. Immigration of parishioners from the
Levant and Iraq have increased within the last decade due to instability in Lebanon and the
Gulf War.

APPENDIX C. DISTRIBUTION OF ARAB-AMERICANS BY STATE

State	Arab	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	Palestine	Syria	Other Arab	TOTAL
Alabama	757	279	45	287	3672	367	270	162	5839
Alaska	148	0	0	0	279	15	76	23	541
Arizona	1600	568	243	195	6296	497	1820	662	11881
Arkansas	303	43	47	13	817	144	301	186	1854
California	27688	19597	6080	5503	49776	11566	15803	8606	144619
Colorado	1394	489	158	71	3544	489	801	656	7602
Conn.	815	735	85	57	8612	322	1843	449	12918
Delaware	250	221	39	24	533	94	202	107	1470
District of Columbia	493	291	44	16	1070	186	116	563	2779
Florida	7233	3119	696	615	24322	2786	8225	2990	49986
Georgia	1198	1043	90	300	5792	420	1032	552	10427
Hawaii	254	125	0	0	504	10	152	116	1161
Idaho	183	40	26	7	285	23	145	31	740
Illinois	10468	2407	1638	1833	8299	5534	3367	1574	35120
Indiana	1513	571	47	170	3610	471	1773	337	8492
Iowa	391	221	30	130	2180	165	660	227	4004
Kansas	579	228	74	103	2937	270	450	230	4871
Kentucky	569	147	17	229	3153	231	639	162	5147
Louisiana	1271	269	98	123	6705	454	1659	284	10863
Maine	156	14	0	9	2623	67	490	39	3398
Maryland	2160	1817	468	467	5771	1038	1845	2296	15862
Mass.	2782	2197	383	326	29700	903	7552	1559	45402
Michigan	14842	1785	6668	1441	39673	2695	7656	2310	77070
Minnesota	751	760	80	111	6096	368	1114	505	9785
Mississippi	160	141	9	37	3177	92	314	154	4084
Missouri	1090	520	119	122	4973	291	1230	827	9172
Montana	52	37	18	19	816	23	164	36	1165
Nebraska	310	186	23	15	1682	14	749	122	3101
Nevada	553	253	30	33	2219	57	789	272	4206
New Hampshire	307	185	51	0	3777	8	628	51	5007
New Jersey	5311	11704	632	1234	12261	2367	11722	1942	47173
New Mexico	712	143	31	41	1974	112	269	210	3492
New York	12884	15211	2814	2408	31089	4098	18201	9132	95837

Table C-1. Distribution of Arab-Americans by State and Nationality. After Bureau of the Census 1990, CP-2-1. Arab refers to those persons who identified themselves as such in their census response. Other Arab includes persons who listed Arabian Peninsula countries such as Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Yemen, or North African countries such as Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, and Sudan as their ancestral homelands.

State	Arab	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	Palestine	Syria	Other Arab	TOTAL
North Carolina	1348	903	124	265	5619	894	1114	371	10638
North Dakota	26	28	28	26	563	20	204	89	984
Ohio	5340	1654	267	723	27226	2436	6145	1114	44905
Oklahoma	790	328	74	153	4308	181	732	340	6906
Oregon	866	255	104	43	2611	317	1350	741	6287
Penn.	2893	2071	299	431	19234	821	12591	1907	40247
Rhode Island	380	306	9	78	2666	44	2796	91	6370
South Carolina	608	279	11	118	3732	140	637	250	5775
South Dakota	49	63	32	16	717	24	300	61	1262
Tennessee	1085	453	149	203	2837	464	700	538	6429
Texas	7067	3146	495	1498	21934	2944	5322	2381	44787
Utah	404	94	43	66	1534	105	315	169	2730
Vermont	55	55	0	0	1359	12	173	47	1701
Virginia	4122	2462	570	660	10692	2170	2248	2332	25256
Washington	1725	588	202	235	3784	451	1189	734	8908
West Virginia	256	122	13	8	4178	76	806	76	5535
Wisconsin	1139	421	9	194	2827	735	878	491	6694
Wyoming	34	0	0	0	142	8	49	23	256
TOTAL	127364	78574	23212	20656	394180	48019	129606	49127	870738

Table C-1. Distribution of Arab-Americans by State and Nationality, Continued.

96

APPENDIX D. COMPARISON OF SELECTED ETHNIC GROUPS
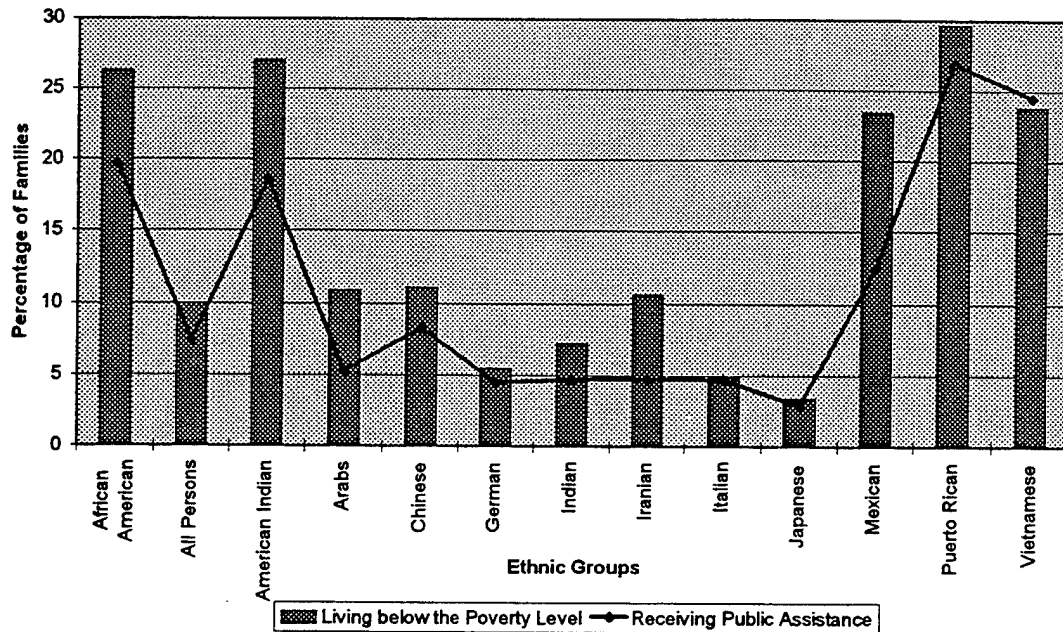
Figure D-1. Economic Hardship of Selected Ethnic Groups. After Bureau of the
Census 1990 <u>CP-2-1</u> and <u>CP-3-2</u>.
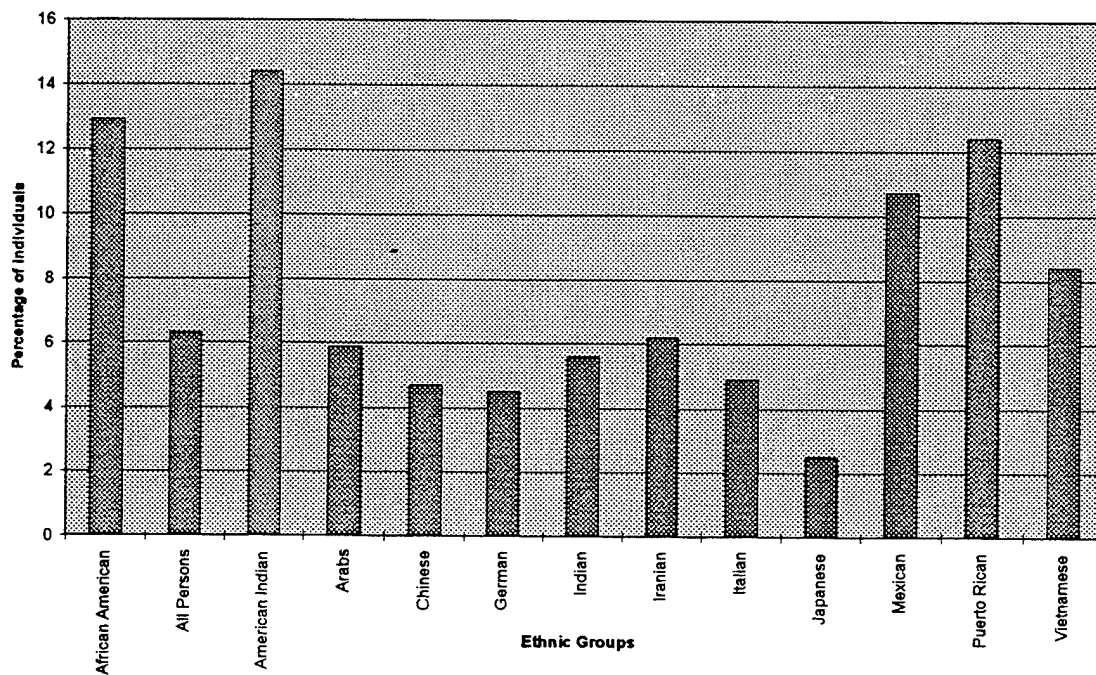
Figure D-2. Unemployment Statistics for Selected Ethnic Groups. After Bureau of
the Census 1990 <u>CP-2-1</u> and <u>CP-3-2</u>.

97

Income in Dollars
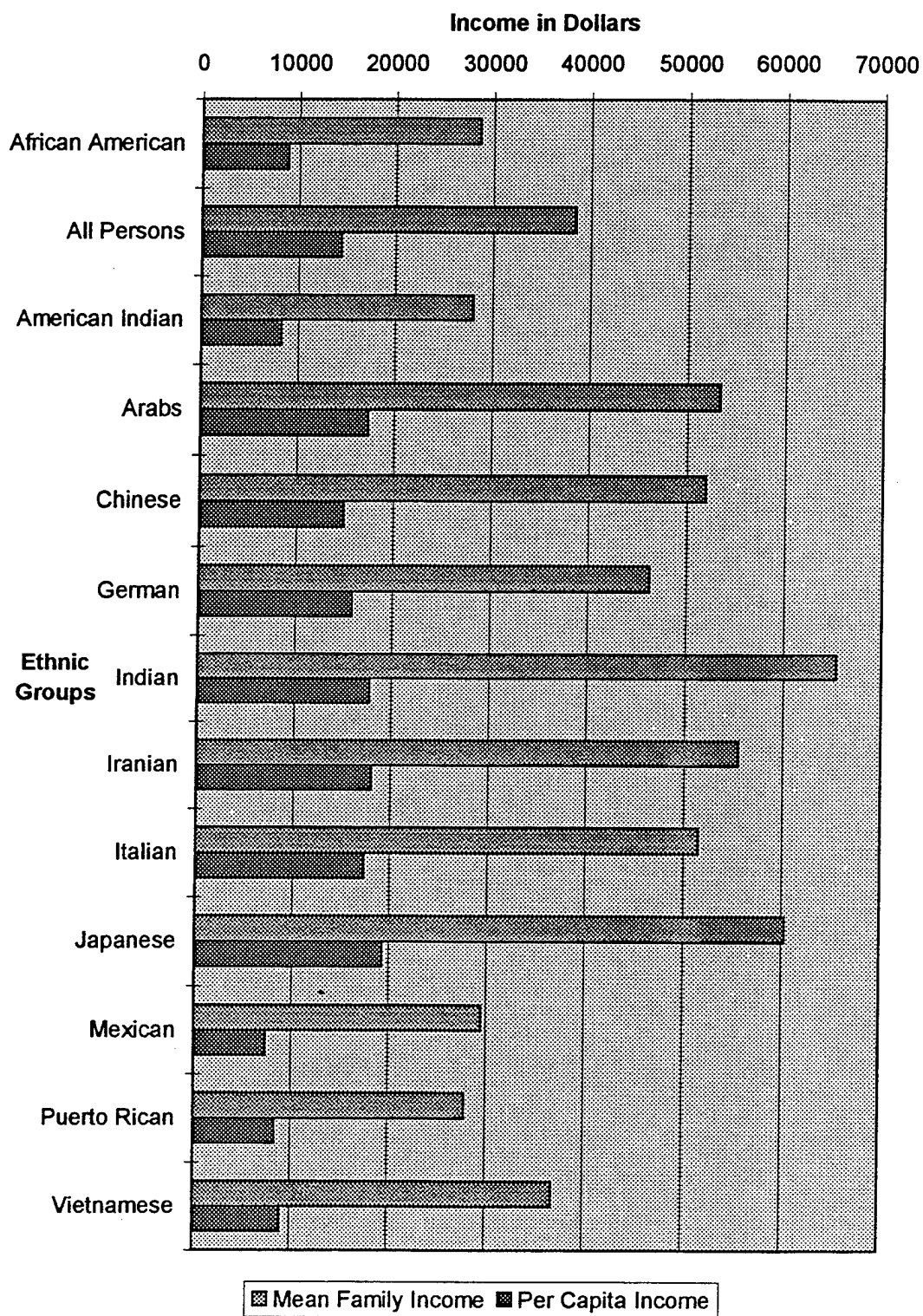
Figure D-3. Income Levels of Selected Ethnic Groups. After
Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-2-1 and CP-3-2.

98

Percentage of Individuals
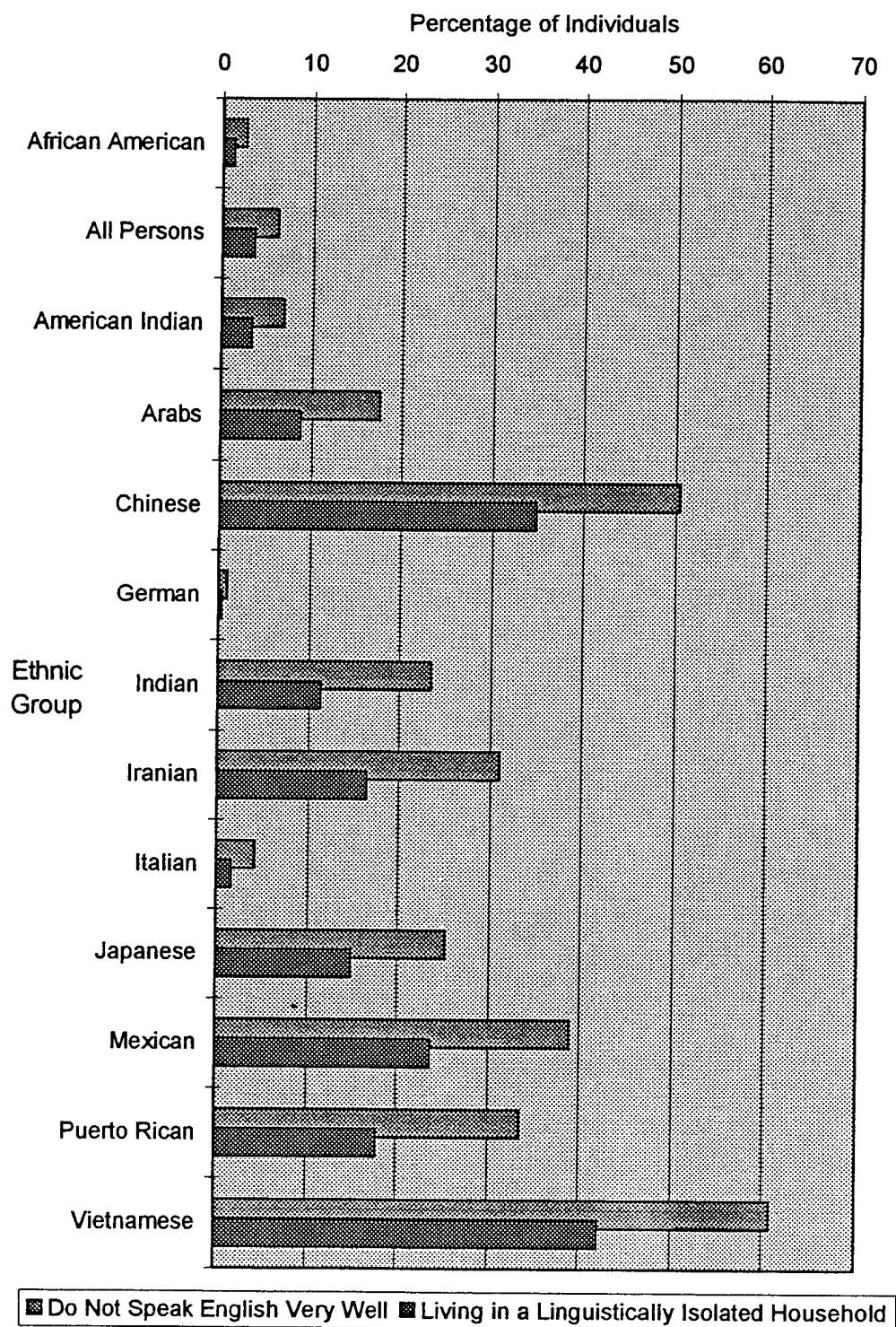
Figure D-4. English Speaking Abilities of Selected Ethnic
Groups. After Bureau of the Census 1990
CP-2-1 and CP-3-2.

Percentage of Individuals
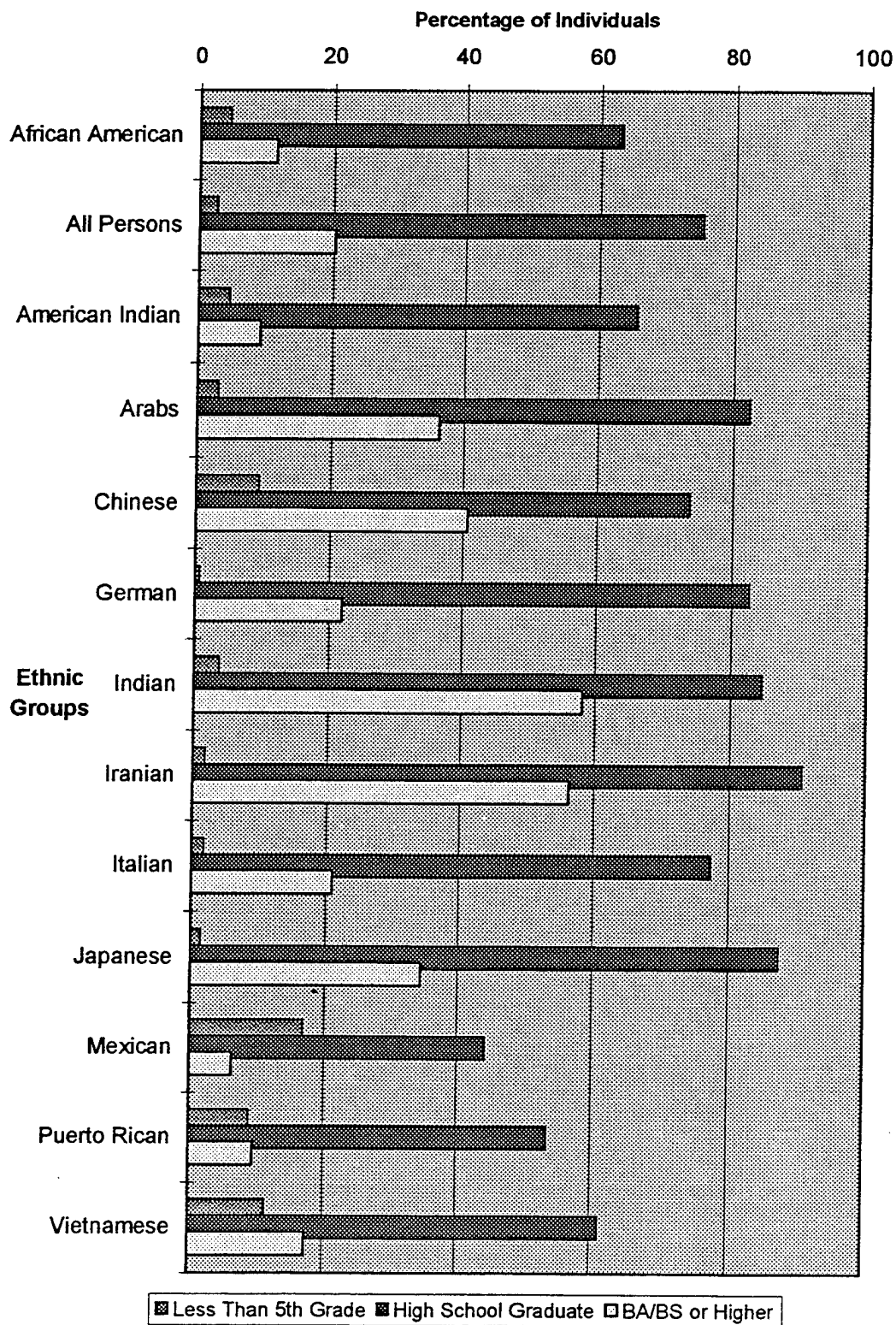
Figure D-5. Educational Attainment by Selected Ancestries.
After Bureau of the Census 1990 CP-2-1 and CP-3-2.

Legend: ☒ Less Than 5th Grade ■ High School Graduate ☐ BA/BS or Higher

Ethnic Groups (top to bottom): African American, All Persons, American Indian, Arabs, Chinese, German, Indian, Iranian, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Vietnamese

APPENDIX E. NUMBER OF ARABIC SPEAKERS BY STATE

State	Number of Arab-Americans	Number of Arabic Speakers
Alabama	5839	2069
Alaska	541	153
Arizona	11881	3531
Arkansas	1854	815
California	144619	73738
Colorado	7602	2787
Connecticut	12918	3352
Delaware	1470	585
District of Columbia	2779	1947
Florida	49986	16246
Georgia	10427	3692
Hawaii	1161	274
Idaho	740	221
Illinois	35120	19935
Indiana	8492	2998
Iowa	4004	1499
Kansas	4871	1833
Kentucky	5147	1659
Louisiana	10863	2419
Maine	3398	231
Maryland	15862	6929
Massachusetts	45402	13128
Michigan	77070	40242
Minnesota	9785	2387
Mississippi	4084	976
Missouri	9172	2528
Montana	1165	119
Nebraska	3101	787
Nevada	4206	1222
New Hampshire	5007	798
New Jersey	47173	24384
New Mexico	3492	728
New York	95837	44060
North Carolina	10638	4300

Table E-1. Number of Arab-Americans and Arabic Speakers by State. After Bureau of the Census 1990 <u>CP-2-1</u>.

State	Number Of Arab-Americans	Number of Arabic Speakers
North Dakota	984	151
Ohio	44905	14816
Oklahoma	6906	2082
Oregon	6287	2258
Pennsylvania	40247	10887
Rhode Island	6370	1651
South Carolina	5775	2121
South Dakota	1262	148
Tennessee	6429	2800
Texas	44787	16753
Utah	2730	703
Vermont	1701	117
Virginia	25256	11399
Washington	8908	3401
West Virginia	5535	1053
Wisconsin	6694	2178
Wyoming	256	60

Table E-1. Number of Arab-Americans and Arabic Speakers by State, Continued.

APPENDIX F. DISTRIBUTION OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS AND MOSQUES

State	Number of Islamic Schools	Number of Mosques
Alabama	0	15
Alaska	0	1
Arizona	1	8
Arkansas	1	4
California	12	117
Colorado	1	11
Connecticut	0	16
Delaware	0	2
District of Columbia	0	13
Florida	4	31
Georgia	3	24
Hawaii	0	1
Idaho	0	6
Illinois	8	74
Indiana	2	20
Iowa	0	5
Kansas	0	4
Kentucky	1	10
Louisiana	1	24
Maine	0	0
Maryland	4	16
Massachusetts	2	22
Michigan	9	46
Minnesota	0	6
Mississippi	0	9
Missouri	3	11
Montana	0	3
Nebraska	0	4
Nevada	0	4
New Hampshire	0	1
New Jersey	7	55
New Mexico	0	8
New York	14	132
North Carolina	1	20
North Dakota	0	4

Table F-1. Distribution of Islamic Schools and Mosques by State. After Directory 1994.

State	Number of Islamic Schools	Number of Mosques
Ohio	1	40
Oklahoma	1	12
Oregon	1	9
Pennsylvania	3	43
Rhode Island	0	2
South Carolina	0	13
South Dakota	0	2
Tennessee	2	13
Texas	8	68
Utah	0	4
Vermont	0	0
Virginia	1	26
Washington	1	13
West Virginia	0	4
Wisconsin	1	10
Wyoming	0	2
TOTAL	93	988

Table F-1. Distribution of Islamic Schools and Mosques by State, Continued.

APPENDIX G. DISTRIBUTION OF EASTERN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES BY STATE

State	Antiochian Orthodox	Chaldean	Coptic	Maronite	Melkite	Syrian Orthodox
Alabama	0	0	0	1	1	0
Alaska	1	0	0	0	0	0
Arizona	2	0	0	0	1	0
Arkansas	0	0	0	0	0	0
California	21	4	9	4	9	3
Colorado	4	0	1	0	0	0
Connecticut	2	0	0	3	3	0
Delaware	0	0	0	0	0	0
District of Columbia	1	0	0	2	0	0
Florida	11	0	2	2	2	0
Georgia	2	0	0	1	2	1
Hawaii	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	0	0	0	0	0	0
Illinois	3	2	2	2	1	2
Indiana	6	0	0	0	2	0
Iowa	2	0	0	0	0	0
Kansas	2	0	0	0	0	0
Kentucky	2	0	0	0	0	0
Louisiana	2	0	0	0	0	0
Maine	0	0	0	1	0	0
Maryland	2	0	0	0	0	1
Massachusetts	7	0	1	7	6	2
Michigan	11	4	1	2	3	1
Minnesota	2	0	2	2	0	0
Mississippi	2	0	0	0	0	0
Missouri	0	0	0	1	0	0
Montana	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nebraska	3	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	1	0	0	0	0	0
New Hampshire	0	0	0	1	1	0
New Jersey	4	0	4	1	2	3
New Mexico	1	0	0	0	0	0
New York	11	0	2	5	11	2
North Carolina	0	0	1	1	0	0
North Dakota	1	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	9	0	1	7	5	0
Oklahoma	2	0	0	0	0	1

Table G-1. Distribution of Eastern Christian Churches by State. After Arab-American Almanac 1994.

105

State	Antiochian Orthodox	Chaldean	Coptic	Maronite	Melkite	Syrian Orthodox
Oregon	1	0	0	1	0	1
Pennsylvania	18	0	2	9	1	1
Rhode Island	1	0	1	1	2	1
South Carolina	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tennessee	2	0	0	0	0	0
Texas	7	0	1	3	0	2
Utah	1	0	0	1	0	0
Vermont	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virginia	0	0	0	2	1	0
Washington	2	0	0	0	0	0
West Virginia	3	0	0	1	0	0
Wisconsin	2	0	0	0	1	0
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table G-1. Distribution of Eastern Churches by State, Continued.

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